

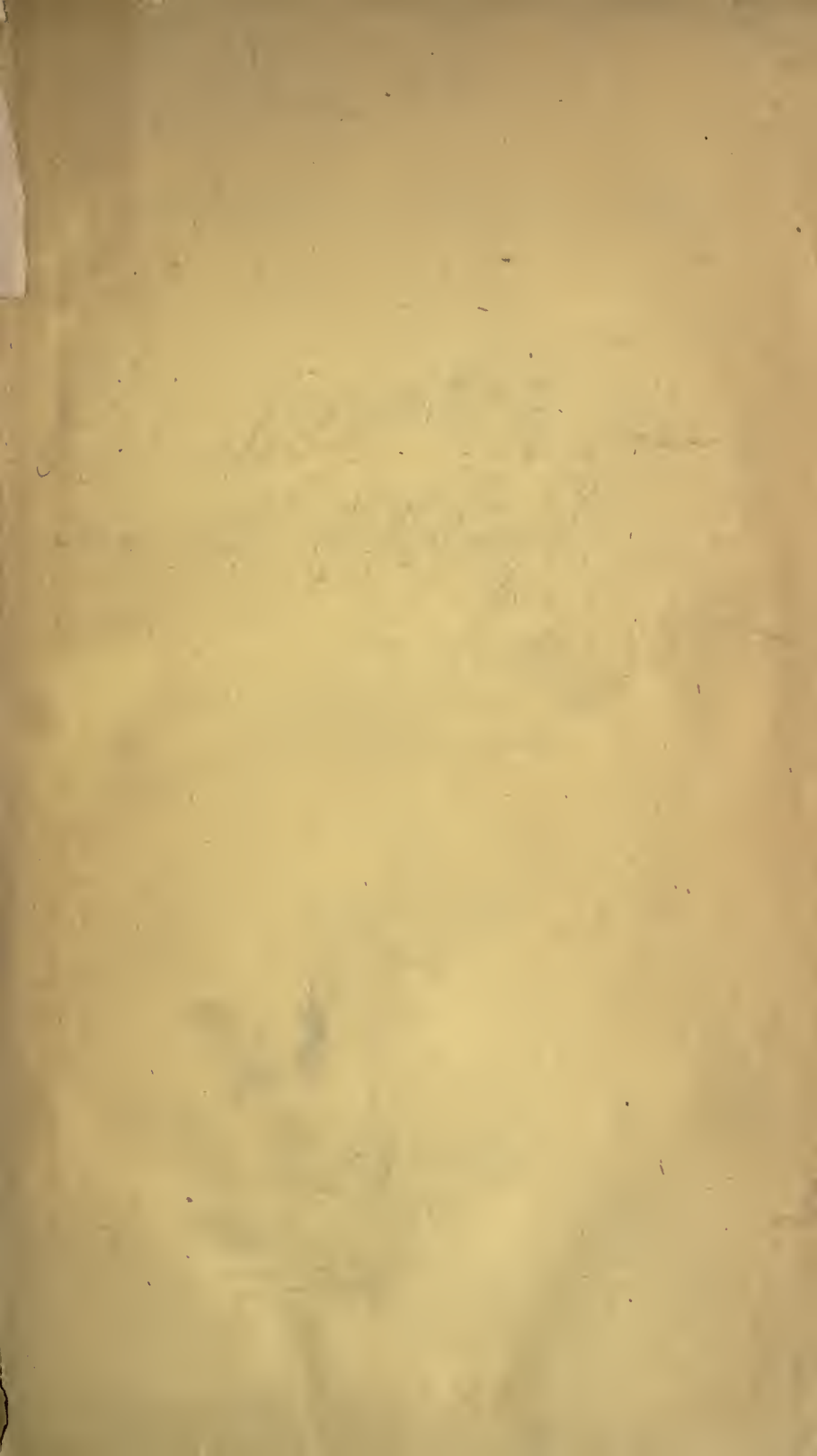
UNIVERSITY OF ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE



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THE
POLITICAL WRITINGS

OF
THOMAS PAINE,

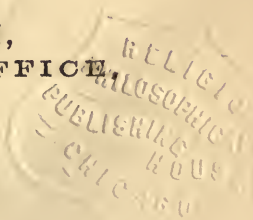
SECRETARY TO THE COMMITTEE OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS IN THE
AMERICAN REVOLUTION.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED
A BRIEF SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR'S LIFE.
A NEW EDITION WITH ADDITIONS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

J. P. MENDUM,
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PROSPECTS ON THE RUBICON:

**OR AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE CAUSES AND
CONSEQUENCES OF THE POLITICS TO BE
AGITATED AT THE NEXT MEETING
OF PARLIAMENT.**

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
THE DIVISION OF THE PHYSICAL SCIENCES
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PREFACE.

AN expression in the British parliament respecting the American war, alluding to Julius Cæsar having passed the Rubicon, has on several occasions introduced that river as the figurative river of war.

Fortunately for England, she is yet on the peaceable side of the Rubicon ; but as the flames once kindled are not always easily extinguished, the hopes of peace are not so clear as before the late mysterious dispute began.

But while the calm lasts, it may answer a very good purpose to take a view of the prospects, consistent with the maxim, that he that goeth to war should first sit down and count the cost.

The nation has a young and ambitious minister at its head, fond of himself, and deficient in experience : and instances have often shown that judgment is a different thing from genius, and that the affairs of a nation are but unsafely trusted where the benefit of experience is wanting.

Illustrations have been drawn from the circumstances of the war before last, to decorate the character of the present minister, and, perhaps, they may have been greatly over-drawn ; for the management must have been bad to have done less than what was then done, when we impartially consider the means, the force, and the quantity of money employed.

It was then Great Britain and America against France singly, for Spain did not join till near the close of the war. The great number of troops which the American colonies then raised, and paid themselves, were sufficient to turn the scale, if all other parts had been equal. France had not at that time attended to naval affairs so much as she has done since ; and the capture of French sailors before any declaration of war was made, which, however it may be justified upon policy, will always be ranked among the clandestine arts of war, assured a certain, but unfair advantage against her, because it was like a man administering a disabling dose over night to the person whom he intends to challenge in the morning.

THE AUTHOR.

PROSPECTS ON THE RUBICON.



RIGHT by chance and wrong by system, are things so frequently seen in the political world, that it becomes a proof of prudence neither to censure nor applaud too soon.

“The Rubicon is passed,” was once given as a reason for prosecuting the most expensive war that England ever knew. Sore with the event, and groaning beneath a galling yoke of taxes, she has again been led ministerially on to the shore of the same delusive and fatal river, without being permitted to know the object or reason why.

Expensive preparations have been gone into ; fears, alarms, dangers and apprehensions, have been mystically held forth, as if the existence of the nation was at stake, and at last the mountain has brought forth a Dutch mouse.

Whoever will candidly review the present national characters of England and France, cannot but be struck with surprise at the change that is taking place. The people of France are beginning to think for themselves, and the people of England are resigning up the privilege of thinking.

The affairs of Holland have been the bubble of the day ; and a tax is to be laid on shoes and boots (so say the newspapers) for the service of the stadtholder of Holland. This will undoubtedly do honor to the nation, by verifying the old English proverb, “over shoes over boots.”

But though Democritus could scarcely have forborne laughing

at the folly, yet, as serious argument and sound reasoning are preferable to ridicule, it will be best to quit the vein of unprofitable humour, and give the cause a fair investigation. But before we do this, it may not be improper to take a general review of sundry political matters that will naturally lead to a better understanding of the subject.

What has been the event of all the wars of England, but an amazing accumulation of debt, and an unparelled burden of taxes? Sometimes the pretence has been to support one outlandish cause and sometimes another. At one time Austria, and another time Prussia, another to oppose Russia, and so on; but the consequence has always been *taxes*. A few men have enriched themselves by jobs and contracts, and the groaning multitude borne the burden. What has England gained by war, since the year 1738, only fifty years ago, to recompense her for *two hundred millions* sterling, incurred as a debt within that time, and under the annual interest of which, besides what was incurred before, she is now groaning? Nothing at all.

The glare of fancied glory has often been held up, and the shadowy recompense imposed itself upon the senses. Wars that might have been prevented have been madly gone into, and the end has been debt and discontent. A sort of something which man cannot account for is mixed in his composition, and renders him the subject of deception by the very means he takes not to be deceived.

That jealousy which individuals of every nation feel at the supposed design of foreign powers, fits them to be the prey of ministers, and of those among themselves, whose trade is war, or whose livelihood is jobs and contracts. "Confusion to the politics of Europe, and may every nation be at war in six months," was a toast given in my hearing not long since.—The man was in court to the ministry for a job.—Ye gentle graces, if any such there be who preside over human actions, how must ye weep at the viciousness of man!

When we consider, for the feelings of nature cannot be dismissed, the calamities of war and the miseries it inflicts upon the human species, the thousands and tens of thousands of every age and sex who are rendered wretched by the event, surely there is something in the heart of man that calls upon him to think! Surely there is some tender chord tuned by the hand of its creator,

that struggles to emit in the hearing of the soul a note of sorrowing sympathy. Let it then be heard, and let men learn to feel, that the true greatness of a nation is founded on the principles of humanity; and that to avoid a war when her own existence is not endangered, and wherein the happiness of man must be wantonly sacrificed, is a higher principle of true honor than madly to engage in it.

But independent of all civil and moral considerations, there is no possible event that a war could produce benefits to England or France, on the present occasion, that could in the most distant proportion recompense to either the expense she must be at. War involves in its progress such a train of unforeseen and unsuspected circumstances, such a combination of foreign matters, that no human wisdom can calculate the end. It has but one thing certain, and that is increase of *taxes*. The policy of European courts is now so cast, and their interests so interwoven with each other, that however easy it may be to begin a war, the weight and influence of interfering nations compel even the conqueror to unprofitable conditions of peace.

Commerce and maritime strength are now becoming the fashion, or rather the rage of Europe, and this naturally excites in them a combined wish to prevent either England or France increasing its comparative strength by destroying, or even relatively weakening the other, and therefore whatever views each may have at the commencement of a war, new enemies will arise as either gains the advantage, and continued obstacles ensue to embarrass success.

The greatness of Lewis the fourteenth, made Europe his enemy, and the same cause will produce the same consequence to any other European power. That nation, therefore, is only truly wise, who, contenting herself with the means of defence, creates to herself no unnecessary enemies by seeking to be greater than the system of Europe admits. The monarch or the minister who exceeds this line, knows but little of his business. It is what the poet, on another occasion, calls,

“The point where sense and nonsense join.”

Perhaps there is not a greater instance of the folly of calculating upon events, than is to be found in the treaties of alliance. As soon as they have answered the immediate purpose of either of

the parties they are but little regarded. Pretences afterwards are never wanting to explain them away, nor reasons to render them abortive. And if half the money which nations lavish on speculative alliances were reserved for their own immediate purposes, whenever the occasion shall arrive, it would be more productively and advantageously employed.

Monarchs and ministers, from ambition or resentment, often contemplate to themselves schemes of future greatness, and set out with what appears to them the fairest prospect; in the mean while the great wheel of time and fate revolves unobserved, and something never dreamed of turns up and blasts the whole. A few fancied or unprofitable laurels supply the absence of success, and the exhausted nation is *huzza'd into new taxes*.

The politics and interests of European courts are so frequently varying with regard to each other, that there is no fixing even the probability of their future conduct. But the great principle of alliancing seems to be but little understood, or little cultivated in courts, perhaps the least of all, in that of England.—No alliance can be operative that does not embrace within itself, not only the attachment of the sovereigns, but the real interest of the nations.

The alliance between France and Spain, however it may be spoken of as a mere family compact, derives its greatest strength from national interest. The mines of Peru and Mexico, are the soul of this alliance. Were those mines extinct, the family compact would most probably dissolve.

There exists not a doubt in the mind of Spain, what part England would act, respecting those mines, could she demolish the maritime power of France; and therefore the interest of Spain feels itself continually united with France. Spain has high ideas of honor, but has not the same ideas of English honor. They consider England as wholly governed by principles of interest, and that whatever she thinks it her interest to do, and supposes she has the power of doing, she makes very little ceremony of attempting. But this is not all—There is not a nation in Europe but what is more satisfied that those mines should be in the possession of Spain, than in that of any other European nation; because the wealth of those mines, sufficient to ruin Europe in the hands of some of its powers, is innocently employed with respect to Europe, and better and more peaceably distributed among them all, through the medium of Spain, than

it would be through that of any other nation. This is one of the secret causes that combine so large a part of Europe in the interest of France, because they cannot but consider her as a standing barrier to secure to them the free and equal distribution of this wealth throughout all the dominions of Europe.

This alliance of interest is likewise one of the unseen cements that prevents Spain and Portugal, two nations not very friendly to each other, proceeding to hostilities. They are both in the same situation, and, whatever their dislikes may be, they cannot fail to consider that by giving way to resentment that would weaken and exhaust themselves, each would be exposed a prey to some stronger power.

In short, this alliance of national interest is the only one that can be trusted, and the only one that can be operative. All other alliances formed on the mere will and caprice of sovereigns, of family connexions, uncombined with national interest, are but the quagmire of politics, and never fail to become a loss to that nation which wastes its present substance on the expectancy of distant returns.

With regard to Holland, a man must know very little of the matter, not to know that there exists a stronger principle of rivalry between Holland and England in point of commerce, than prevails between England and France in point of power : and, therefore, whenever a stadtholder of Holland shall see it his interest to unite with the principle of his country, and act in concert with the sentiments of the very people who pay him for his services, the means now taken by England to render him formidable, will operate contrary to the political expectations of the present day.

Circumstances will produce their own natural effects, and no other, let the hopes or expectations of man be what they may. It is not our doing a thing with a design that it shall answer such or such an end, that will cause it to produce that end ; the means taken must have a natural ability and tendency within themselves to produce no other, for it is this, and not our wishes or policy, that governs the event.

The English navigation act was levelled against the interest of the Dutch as a whole nation, and therefore it is not to be supposed that the catching at the accidental circumstances of one man, as in the case of the present stadtholder, can combine the interest of that country with this. A few years, perhaps a less time, may

remove him to the place where all things are forgotten, and his successor, contemplating his father's troubles, will be naturally led to reprobate the means that produced them, and to repose himself on the interests of his country, in preference to the accidental and tumultuous assistance of exterior power.

England herself exhibits at this day, a species of this kind of policy. The present reign, by embracing the Scotch, has tranquillized and conciliated the spirit that disturbed the two former reigns. Accusations were not wanting at that time to reprobate the policy as tinctured with ingratitude towards those who were the immediate means of the Hanover succession. The brilliant pen of Junius was drawn forth but in vain. It enraptured without convincing; and though in the plenitude of its rage it might be said to give elegance to bitterness, yet the policy survived the blast.

What then will be the natural consequence of this expense on account of the stadholder, or of a war entered into from that cause? Search the various windings and caverns of the human heart, and draw from thence the most probable conclusion, for this is more to be depended upon than the projects or declarations of ministers.

It may do very well for a paragraph in a newspaper, or the wild effusions of romantic politicians, or the mercenary views of those who wish for war on any occasion, merely for the sake of jobs and contracts, to talk of French finesse or French intrigue; but the Dutch are not a people to be impressed by the finesse or intrigue of France or England, or any other nation. If there has been any finesse in the case, it has been between the elector of Hanover, the king of Prussia, and the stadtholder, in which it is most probable the people of England will be finessed out of a sum of money.

The Dutch, as is already observed, are not a people open to the impression of finesse. It is lost upon them. They are impressed by their commercial interest. It is the political soul of their country, the spring of their actions, and when this principle coincides with their ideas of freedom, it has all the impulse a Dutchman is capable of feeling.

The opposition in Holland were the enemies of the stadtholder, upon a conviction that he was not the friend of their national interests. They wanted no other impulse but this. Whether

this defect in him proceeded from foreign attachment, from bribery or corruption, or from the well known defect of his understanding is not the point of enquiry. It was the effect rather than the cause that irritated the Hollanders.

If the stadtholder made use of the power he held in the government to expose and endanger the interest and property of the very people who supported him, what other incentive does any man in any country require? If the Hollanders conceived the conduct of the stadtholder injurious to their national interest, they had the same right to expel him which England had to expel the Stuarts; and the interference of England to re-establish him, serves only to confirm in the Hollanders the same hatred against England which the attempt of Lewis XIV. to re-establish the Stuarts caused in England against France; therefore if the present policy is intended to attach Holland to England, it goes on a principle exceedingly erroneous.

Let us now consider the situation of the stadtholder, as making another part of the question.

He must place the cause of his troubles to some secret influence which governed his conduct during the late war, or, in other words, that he was suspected of being the tool of the then British Administration. Therefore, as every part of an argument ought to have its weight, instead of charging the French of intriguing with the Hollanders, the charge more consistently lies against the British ministry, for intriguing with the stadtholder; and endangering the nation in a war without a sufficient object. That which the ministry are now doing confirms the suspicion, and explains to the Hollanders that collusion of the stadtholder, against their national interests, which he must wish to have concealed, and the explanation does him more hurt than the unnecessary parade of service has done him good.

Nothing but necessity should have operated with England to appear openly in a case that must put the stadtholder on still worse terms with his countrymen. Had France made any disposition for war, had she armed, had she made any one hostile preparation, there might then have been some pretence for England taking a step, that cannot fail to expose to the world that the suspicions of the Hollanders against the stadtholder were well founded, and that their cause was just, however unsuccessful has been the event.

As to the consequence of Holland in the scale of Europe, (the great stake, says some of the newspapers, for which England is contending) that is naturally pointed out by her condition; as merchants for other nations her interest dictates to her to be a neutral power, and this she always will be unless she is made war upon, as was the case in the last war; and any expectation beyond what is the line of her interest, that is, beyond neutrality, either in England or France, will prove abortive. It therefore cannot be policy to go to war to effect that at a great expence, which will naturally happen of itself, and beyond which there is nothing to expect.

Let Holland be allied with England or with France, or with neither, or with both, her national conduct, consequently arising out of her circumstances, will be nearly the same, that is, she will be neutral. Alliances have such a natural tendency to sink into harmless unoperative things, that to make them a cause for going to war, either to prevent their being formed, or to break any already formed, is the silliest speculation that war can be made upon, or wealth wasted to accomplish. It would scarcely be worth the attempt, if war could be carried on without expence, because almost the whole that can be hoped at the risk and expence of a war, is effected by their natural tendency to inactivity.

However pompous the declarations of an alliance may be, the object of many of them is no other than good-will, and reciprocally securing, as far as such security can go, that neither shall join the enemies of the other in any war that may happen. But the national circumstances of Holland, operate to insure this tranquillity on her part as effectually to the power she is not allied with, as the engagement itself does to the power with whom she is allied; therefore the security from circumstances is as good as the security from engagement.

As to a cordial union of interest between Holland and England, it is as unlikely to happen as between two individual rivals in the same trade; and if there is any step that England could take, to put it at a still greater distance, it is the part she is now acting. She has increased the animosity of Holland on the speculative politics of interesting the stadtholder, whose future repose depends upon uniting with the opposition in Holland, as the present reign did with the Scotch. How foolish then has been the policy, how

needless the expense of engaging in a war on account of the affairs of Holland?

A cordiality between England and France is less improbable than between England and Holland. It is not how an Englishman feels, but how a Dutchman feels, that decides this question. Between England and France there is no real rivalry of interest; it is more the effect of temper, disposition, and the jealousy of confiding in each other, than any substantial cause, that keeps up the animosity. But on the part of Holland towards England, there is over and above the spirit of animosity, the more powerful motives of interested commercial rivalry, and the galling remembrance of past injuries. The making war upon them under lord North's administration, when they were taking no part in the hostilities, but merely acting the business of merchants, is a circumstance that will not easily be forgotten by them. On these reasons, therefore, which are naturally deduced from the operative feelings of mankind, any expectation of attaching Holland to England, as a friendly power, is vague and futile. Nature has her own way of working in the heart, and all plans of politics not founded thereon will disappoint themselves.

Any one who will review the History of English politics for several years past, must perceive they have been directed without system. To establish this, it is only necessary to examine one circumstance, fresh in the mind of every man.

The American war was prosecuted at a very great expense, on the publicly declared opinion, that the retaining America was necessary to the existence of England; but America being now separated from England, the present politics are, that she is better without her than with her. Both these cannot be true, and their contradiction to each other shows want of system. If the latter is true, it amounts to an impeachment of the political judgment of government, because the discovery ought to have been made before the expense was incurred. This single circumstance, yet fresh in every man's mind, is sufficient to create a suspicion, whether the present measures are more wisely founded than the former ones; and whether experience may not prove, that going to war for the sake of the stadtholder, or for the hope of retaining a partial interest in Holland, which under any connexion, can from circumstances be no more than a neutral power, is not as weak policy as going to war to retain America.

If England is powerful enough to maintain her own ground and consequence in the world as an independent nation, she needs no foreign connexion. If she is not, the fact contradicts the popular opinion that she is. Therefore, either her politics are wrong, or her true condition is not what she supposes it to be. Either she must give up her opinion to justify her politics, or renounce her politics to vindicate her opinion.

If some kind of connexion with Holland is supposed to be an object worthy some expense to obtain, it may be asked why was that connexion broken by making war upon her in the last war? If it was not then worth preserving without expense, is it now worth re-obtaining at a vast expense? If the Hollanders do not like the English, can they be made to like them against their wills? If it shall be said that under the former connexion they were unfriendly, will they be more friendly under any other?—They were then in as free a situation to choose as any future circumstances can make them, and, therefore, the national governing sentiment of the country can be easily discovered; for it signifies not what or who a stadtholder may be, that which governs Holland is, and always must be, a commercial principle, and it will follow this line in spite of politics. Interest is as predominant and as silent in its operations as love; it resists all the attempts of force, and countermines all the stratagem of control.

The most able English statesmen and politicians have always held it as a principle, that foreign connexions served only to embarrass and exhaust England. That surrounded by the ocean she could not be invaded, as countries are on the continent of Europe, and that her insular situation dictated to her a different system of politics to what those countries required, and that to be leagued with them was sacrificing the advantages of situation to a capricious system of politics. That though she might serve them they could not much serve her, and that as the service must at all times be paid for, it could always be procured when it was wanted; and that it would be better to take it up in this line than to embarrass herself with speculative alliances that served rather to draw her into a continental war on their account, than extricate her from a war undertaken on her own account.

From this discussion of the affairs of Holland, and of the inadequacy of Holland as an object of war, we will proceed to show that neither England nor France are in a condition to go to war:

and that there is no present object to the one or the other to recompense the expense that each must be at, or atone to the subjects of either for the additional burdens that must be brought upon them. I defend the cause of the poor, of the manufacturers, of the tradesmen, of the farmer, and of all those on whom the real burden of taxes fall—but above all, I defend the cause of humanity.

It will always happen, that any rumor of war will be popular among a great number of people in London.—There are thousands who live by it: it is their harvest; and the clamor which those people keep up in newspapers and conversations passes unsuspectingly for the voice of the people, and it is not till after the mischief is done, that the deception is discovered.

Such people are continually holding up, in very magnified terms, the wealth of the nation, and the depressed condition of France, as reasons for commencing a war, without knowing any thing of either of these subjects.

But admitting them to be as true as they are false, as will be hereafter shown, it certainly indicates a vileness in the national disposition of any country, that will make the accidental internal difficulties to which all nations are subject, and sometimes encumbered with, a reason for making war upon them. The amazing increase and magnitude of the paper currency now floating in all parts of England, exposes her to a shock as much more tremendous than the shock occasioned by the bankruptcy of the South Sea funds, as the quantity of credit and paper currency is now greater than they were at that time. Whenever such a circumstance shall happen, and the wisest men in the nation are, and cannot avoid being, impressed with the danger, it would be looked upon as baseness in France to make the distress and misfortune of England a cause and opportunity for making war upon her, yet this hideous infidelity is publicly avowed in England. The bankruptcy of 1719, was precipitated by the great credit which the funds then had, and the confidence which people placed in them. Is not credit making infinitely greater strides now than it made then? Is not confidence equally as blind now as at that day? The people then supposed themselves as wise as they do now, yet they were miserably deceived, and the deception that has once happened will happen again from the same causes.

Credit is not money, and therefore it is not pay, neither can it be put in the place of money in the end. It is only the means of getting into debt, not the means of getting out, otherwise the national debt could not accumulate; and the delusion which nations are under respecting the extension of credit is exactly like that which every man feels respecting life, the end is always nearer than was expected; and we become bankrupts in time by the same delusion that nations become bankrupts in property.

The little which nations know, or are sometimes willing to know of each other, serves to precipitate them into wars which neither would have undertaken, had they fully known the extent of the power and circumstances of each other; it may therefore be of some use to place the circumstances of England and France in a comparative point of view.

In order to do this the accidental circumstances of a nation must be thrown out of the account. By accidental circumstances is meant, those temporary disjointings and derangements of its internal system which every nation in the world is subject to, and which like accidental fits of sickness in the human body, prevents in the interim the full exertion and exercise of its natural powers.

The substantial basis of the power of a nation arises out of its population, its wealth, and its revenues. To these may be added the disposition of the people. Each of these will be spoken of as we proceed.

Instances are not wanting to show that a nation confiding too much on its natural strength, is less inclined to be active in its operations than one of less natural powers who is obliged to supply that deficiency by encreasing its exertions. This has often been the case between England and France. The activity of England, arising from its fears, has sometimes exceeded the exertions of France reposing on its confidence.

But as this depends on the accidental disposition of a people, it will not always be the same. It is a matter well known to every man who has lately been in France, that a very extraordinary change is working itself in the minds of the people of that nation. A spirit that will render France exceedingly formidable whenever its government shall embrace the fortunate opportunity of doubling its strength by allying, if it may be so expressed (for it is difficult to express a new idea by old terms) the majesty of the sovereign with the majesty of the nation; for of all alliances that is

infinitely the strongest and the safest to be trusted to, because the interest so formed, and operating against external enemies can never be divided.

It may be taken as a certain rule, that a subject of any country attached to the government on the principles above mentioned, is of twice the value he was before. Freedom in the subject is not a diminution, as was formerly believed, of the power of goverment, but an increase of it. Yet the progress by which changes of this kind are effected, requires to be nicely attended to.

Were governments to offer freedom to the people, or to show an anxiety for that purpose, the offer most probably would be rejected. The purpose for which it was offered might be mis-trusted. Therefore the desire must originate with, and proceed from the mass of the people, and when the impression becomes universal, and not before, is the important moment for the most effectual consolidation of national strength and greatness that can take place.

While this change is working, there will appear a kind of chaos in the nation; but the creation we enjoy arose out of chaos, and our greatest blessings appear to have a confused beginning.

Therefore we may take it for granted, that what has at this moment the appearance of disorder in France, is no more than one of the links in that great chain of circumstances by which nations acquire the summit of their greatness. The provincial assemblies already begun in France, are as full, or rather a fuller representation of the people than the parliaments of England are.

The French, or, as they were formerly called, the Franks, (from whence came the English word frank and free) were once the freest people in Europe; and as nations appear to have their per-ricidal revolutions, it is very probable they will be so again. The change is already begun. The people of France, as it was before observed, are beginning to think for themselves, and the people of England resigning up the prerogative of thinking.

We shall now proceed to compare the present condition of England and France as to population, revenues and wealth, and show that neither is in a condition of going to war, and that war can

end in nothing but loss, and most probably, a temporary ruin to both nations.

To establish this point so necessary for both nations to be impressed with, a free investigation of all matters connected with it is indispensable; if, therefore, any thing herein advanced, shall be disagreeable, it can be justified on the ground that it is better to be known in order to prevent ruin, than to be concealed, when such concealment serves only to hasten the ruin.

OF POPULATION.—The population of France being upwards of twenty-four millions, is more than double that of Great Britain and Ireland; besides which France recruits more soldiers in Switzerland than England does in Scotland and Ireland. To this may likewise be added, that England and Ireland are not on the best terms. The suspicion that England governs Ireland for the purpose of keeping her low, to prevent her becoming her rival in trade and manufactures, will always operate to hold Ireland in a state of sentimental hostilities with England.

REVENUES.—The revenues of France are twenty-four millions sterling. The revenues of England fifteen millions and an half. The taxes per head in France are twenty shillings sterling; the taxes per head in England are two pounds four shillings and two pence. The national debt of France, including the life annuities (which are two fifths of the whole debt, and are annually expiring) at eleven years purchase, is one hundred and forty-two millions sterling. The national debt of England, the whole of which is on perpetual interest, is two hundred and forty-five millions. The national debt of France contains a power of annihilating itself without any new taxes for that purpose; because it needs no more than to apply the life annuities as they expire, to the purchase of the other two fifths, which are on perpetual interest: but the national debt of England has not this advantage, and therefore the million a year that is to be applied towards the reducing it is so much additional tax upon the people, over and above the current service.

WEALTH.—This is an important investigation: it ought therefore to be heard with patience, and judged of without prejudice.

Nothing is more common than for people to mistake one thing for another. Do not those who are crying up the wealth of the nation mistake a paper currency for riches? To ascertain this

point may be one of the means of preventing that ruin which cannot fail to follow by persisting in the mistake.

The highest estimation that is made of the quantity of gold and silver in Britain at this present day is twenty millions : and those who are most conversant with money transactions, believe it to be considerably below that sum. Yet this is no more money than what the nation possessed twenty years ago, and therefore, whatever her trade may be, it has produced to her no profit. Certainly no man can be so unwise as to suppose that increasing the quantity of bank notes, which is done with as little trouble as printing of newspapers, is national wealth.

The quantity of money in the nation was very well ascertained in the years 1773, '74, and '76, by calling in the light gold coin.

There were upwards of fifteen millions and a half of gold coin then called in, which with upwards of two millions of heavy guineas that remained out, and the silver coin, made about twenty millions, which is more than there is at this day. There is an amazing increase in the circulation of bank paper, which is no more national wealth than newspapers are ; because an increase of promissory notes, the capital remaining unincreasing in the same proportion, is no increase of wealth. It serves to raise false ideas which the judicious soon discover, and the ignorant experience to their cost.

Out of twenty millions sterling, the present quantity of real money in the nation, it would be too great an allowance to say that one fourth of that sum, which is five millions, was in London. But even admitting this to be the case, it would require no very superior powers to ascertain pretty nearly what proportion of that sum of five millions could be in the bank. It would be ridiculous to suppose it could be less than half a million, and extravagant to suppose it could be two millions.

It likewise requires no very extraordinary discernment to ascertain how immense the quantity of bank notes, compared to the capital in the bank must be, when it is considered, that the national taxes are paid in bank notes ; that all great transactions are done in bank notes ; and that were a loan for twenty millions to be opened at the meeting of parliament, it would most probably be subscribed in a few days : yet all men must know the loan could not be paid in money, because it is at least four times

greater than all the money in London, including the bankers and the bank amount too. In short, every thing shows, that the rage that overrun America, for paper money or paper currency, has reached to England under another name. There it was called continental money, and here it is called bank notes. But it signifies not what name it bears, if the capital is not equal to the redemption.

There is likewise another circumstance that cannot fail to strike with some force when it is mentioned, because every man that has any thing to do with money transactions, will feel the truth of it, though he may not before have reflected upon it. It is the embarrassed condition into which the gold coin is thrown by the necessity of weighing it, and by refusing guineas that are even standing weight, and there appear to be but few heavy ones. Whether this is intended to force the paper currency into circulation, is not here attempted to be asserted, but it certainly has that effect to a very great degree, because people, rather than submit to the trouble and hazard of weighing, will take paper in preference to money. This was once the case in America.

The natural effect of increasing and continuing to increase paper currencies is that of banishing the real money. The shadow takes place of the substance till the country is left with only shadows in its hands.

A trade that does not increase the quantity of real money in a country, cannot be styled a profitable trade; yet this is certainly the case with England: and as to credit, of which so much has been said, it may be founded on ignorance or a false belief, as well as on real ability.

In Amsterdam, the money deposited in the bank is never taken out again. The depositors when they have debts to pay, transfer their right to the persons to whom they are indebted, and those again proceed by the same practice, and the transfer of the right goes for payment: now could all the money deposited in the bank of Amsterdam be privately removed away, and the matter be kept a secret, the ignorance or the belief that the money was still there, would give the same credit as if it had not been removed. In short, credit is often no more than opinion, and the difference between credit and money, is, that money requires no opinion to support it.

All the countries in Europe annually increase in their quantity of gold and silver except England. By the registers kept at Lisbon and Cadiz, the two ports into which the gold and silver from South America are imported, it appears that above eighty millions sterling have been imported within twenty years.* This has spread itself over Europe and increased the quantity in all the countries on the continent; yet twenty years ago there was as much gold and silver in England as there is at this time.

The value of the silver imported into Europe exceeds that of the gold, yet every one can see there is no increase of silver coin in England; very little silver coin appearing, except what are called Birmingham shillings, which have a faint impression of king William on one side, and are smooth on the other.

In what is the profits of trade to show itself but by increasing the quantity of that which is the object of trade, money? An increase of paper is not an increase of national money, and the confounding paper and money together, or not attending to the distinction, is a rock that the nation will one day split upon.

Whether the payment of interest to foreigners, or the trade to the East Indies, or the nation embroiling itself in foreign wars, or whether the amount of trade which England carries on with different parts of the world, collectively taken, balances itself without profit; whether one or all of these is the cause, why the quantity of money does not increase in England, is not, in this place, the object of inquiry. It is the fact and not the cause that is the matter here treated of.

Men immersed in trade and the concerns of a compting-house, are not the most speculative in national affairs, nor always the best judges of them. Accustomed to run risks in trade, they are habitually prepared to run risks with government, and though they are the first to suffer, they are often the last to foresee an evil.

Let us now cast a look towards the manufactures. A great deal has been said of their flourishing condition, and perhaps a great deal too much, for it may again be asked, where is the profit if there is no increase of money?

The woollen manufacture is the staple manufacture of England, and this is evidently on the decline, in some, if not in all its branches.

* From 1763 to 1777, a period of fifteen years of peace, the registered importations of gold and silver into Lisbon and Cadiz, was seventy millions sterling, besides what was privately landed.

The city of Norwich, one of the most populous cities in England, and wholly dependant on the woollen manufacture, is at this day, in a very impoverished condition, owing to the decline of its trade.

But not to rest the matter on a general assertion, or embarrass it with numerous statements, we will produce a circumstance by which the whole progress of the trade may be ascertained.

So long as thirty years ago, the price paid to the spinners of wool was one shilling for twenty-four skeins, each skein containing five hundred and sixty yards. This, according to the term of the trade, was giving a shilling for a shilling. A good hand would spin twelve skeins, which was six pence a day.

According to the increase of taxes, and the increased price of all the articles of life, they certainly ought now to get at least fifteen pence, for what thirty years ago they got one shilling. But such is the decline of the trade, that the case is directly the contrary. They now get but nine pence for the shilling, that is, they get but nine pence for what thirty years ago they got one shilling. Can these people cry out for war, when they are already half ruined by the decline of trade, and half devoured by the increase of taxes?

But this is not the whole of the misfortunes which that part of the country suffers, and which will extend to others. The Norfolk farmers were the first who went into the practice of manuring their land with marl; but time has shown that though it gave a vigour to the land for some years, it operated in the end to exhaust its stamina; that the lands in many parts are worse than before they begun to marl, and that it will not answer to marl a second time.

The manufactures of Manchester, Birmingham and Sheffield have had of late a considerable spring, but this appears to be rather on speculation than certainty. The speculations on the American market have failed, and that on Russia is becoming very precarious. Experience likewise was wanting to ascertain the quantity which the treaty of commerce with France would give sale to, and it is most probable the estimations have been too high, more especially as English goods will now become unpopular in France, which was not the case before the present injudicious rupture.

But in the best state which manufactures can be in, they are very unstable sources of national wealth. The reasons are, that

they seldom continue long in one state. The market for them depends upon the caprice of fashions, and sometimes of politics in foreign countries, and they are at all times exposed to rivalry as well as to change. The Americans have already several manufactures among them, which they prefer to the English, such as axes, scythes, sickles, hoes, planes, nails, &c. Window glass which was once a considerable article of exportation from England to America, the Americans now procure from other countries, nearly as good as the English crown glass, and but little dearer than the common green window glass.

It is somewhat remarkable that so many pens have been displayed to show what is called the increase of the commerce of England, and yet all of them have stepped short of the grand point, that is, they have gone no further than to show that a larger proportion of shipping, and a greater quantity of tonnage have been employed of late years than formerly ; but this is no more than what is happening in other parts of Europe. The present fashion of the world is commerce, and the quantity increases in France as well as in England.

But the object of all trade is profit, and profit shows itself, not by an increase of paper currency, for that may be nationally had without the trouble of trade, but by an increase of real money ; therefore the estimation should have ended, not in the comparative quantity of shipping and tonnage, but in the comparative quantity of gold and silver.

Had the quantity of gold and silver increased in England, the ministerial writers would not have stopped short at shipping and tonnage ; but if they know any thing of the matter, they must know that it does not increase, and that the deception is occasioned by the increase of paper money, and that as paper continues to increase, gold and silver will diminish. Poorer in wealth, and richer in delusion.

Something is radically wrong, and time will discover it to be putting paper in the room of money.

Out of one hundred millions sterling of gold and silver, which must have been imported into Europe from South America since the commencement of the peace before last, it does not appear that England has derived or retains any portion of it.

M. Neckar states the annual increase of gold and silver in France, that is, the proportion which France draws, of the annual

importation into Europe, to be upwards of one million sterling. But England, in the space of twenty years, does not appear to have increased in any thing but paper currency.

Credulity is wealth while credulity lasts, and credit is, in a thousand instances, the child of credulity. It requires no more faith to believe paper to be money, than to believe a man could go into a quart bottle; and the nation whose credulity can be imposed upon by bottle conjuring, can, for a time, be imposed upon by paper conjuring.

From these matters we pass on to make some observations on the national debt, which is another species of paper currency.

In short, to whatever point the eye is directed, whether to the money, the paper, the manufactures, the taxes, or the debt, the inability of supporting a war is evident, unless it is intended to carry it on by fleecing the skin over people's ears by taxes; and therefore the endangering the nation in a war for the sake of the stadtholder of Holland, or the king of Prussia, or any other foreign affairs, from which England can derive no possible advantage, is an absurd and ruinous system of politics.

France, perhaps, is not in a better situation, and therefore, a war where both must lose, and wherein they could only act the part of seconds, must historically have been denominated a boyish, foolish, unnecessary quarrel.

But before we enter on the subject of the national debt, it will be proper to make a general review of the different manner of carrying on war since the revolution to what was the practice before.

Before the revolution the intervals of peace and war always found means to pay off the expense, and leave the nation clear of incumbrance at the commencement of any succeeding war; and even for some years after the revolution this practice was continued.

From the year 1688, (the era of the revolution) to the year 1702, a period of fourteen years, the sums borrowed by government at different times, amounted to forty-four millions; yet this sum was paid off almost as fast as it was borrowed; thirty-four millions was paid off, at the commencement of the year 1702. This was a greater exertion than the nation has ever made since, for exertion is not in borrowing but in paying.

From that time wars have been carried on by borrowing and funding the capital on a perpetual interest, instead of paying it off, and thereby continually carrying forward and accumulating the weight and expense of every war into the next. By this means that which was light at first becomes immensely heavy at last. The nation has now on its shoulders the weight of all the wars from the time of queen Anne. This practice is exactly like that of loading a horse with a feather at a time till you break his back.

The national debt exhibits at this day a striking novelty. It has travelled on in a circular progression till the amount of the annual interest has exactly overtaken, or become equal to, the first capital of the national debt, *nine millions*. Here begins the evidence of the predictions so long foretold by the ablest calculators in the nation. The interest will in succession overtake all the succeeding capitals, and that with the proportioned rapidity with which those capitals accumulated; because by continuing the practice, not only higher and higher premiums must be given for loans, but the money, or rather the paper, will not go so far as it formerly did, and therefore the debt will increase with a continual increasing velocity.

The expense of every war since the national debt began, has, upon an average, been double the expense of the war preceding it; the expense of the next war will be at least two hundred millions, which will increase the annual interest to at least seventeen millions, and consequently the taxes in the same proportion; the following war will increase the interest to thirty-three millions, and a third war will mount up the interest to sixty-five millions. This is not going on in the spirit of prediction, but taking what has already been as a rule for what will again be, and therefore the nation has but a miserable prospect to look at. The weight of accumulating interest is not much felt till after many years have passed over; but when it begins to be heavy, as it does now, the burden increases like that of purchasing a horse with a farthing for the first nail of the shoe and doubling it.

As to Mr Pitt's scheme of reducing the national debt by a million a year, applied to the purchase of stock, it will turn out, to say the least of it, a ridiculous and frivolous project: for if a minister has not experience enough to distinguish a feather floating in the air, from the god of war, nor the cla-

mours and interest of those who are seeking for jobs and contracts, from the voice and interests of the people, he will soon precipitate the nation into some unnecessary war; and therefore any scheme of redemption of the debt, founded on the supposed continuance of peace, will, with such conduct, be no more than a balloon.

That the funding system contains within itself the seeds of its own destruction, is as certain as that the human body contains within itself the seeds of death. The event is as fixed as fate, unless it can be taken as a proof that because we are not dead we are not to die.

The consequence of the funding scheme, even if no other event takes place, will be to create two violent parties in the nation. The one, goaded by the continual increase of taxes to pay the interest; the other reaping a benefit from the taxes by receiving the interest. This is very strongly shadowed forth, like the hand writing on the wall, by the ingenious author of the Commercial Atlas, in his observations on the national debt.

The slumber that for several years has overshadowed the nation in all matters of public finance, cannot be supposed to last for ever. The people have not yet awakened to the subject, and it is taken for granted that they never will. But if a supposed unnecessary expenditure of between five and six millions sterling, in the finances of France (for the writer undertakes not to judge of the fact) has awakened that whole nation, a people supposed to be perfectly docile in all national matters, surely the people of England will not be less attentive to their rights and properties. If this should not be the case, the inference will be fairly drawn, that England is losing the spirit that France is taking up, and that it is an ingenious device in the ministry to compose the nation to unpopular and unnecessary taxes, by shamming a victory when there was no enemy at hand.

In short every war serves to increase every kind of paper currency in the nation, and to diminish the quantity of gold and silver, by sending it to Prussia and other foreign countries.

It will not be denied that credulity is a strong trait in the English character; and this has in no instance shown itself more than in mistaking paper for money, except it be in the unaccountable ignorance of mistaking the debt of the nation for riches. But the suspicion is begining to awaken.

We will close this article with observing, that a new kind of paper currency has arisen within a few years, which is that of country bank notes; almost every town now has its bank, its paper mint, and the coinage of paper has become universal. In the mean time the melting down the light guineas, and recoinage them, passes with those who know no better, for an increase of money; because every new guinea they see, and which is but seldom, they naturally suppose to be a guinea more, when it is really nothing else than an old guinea new cast.

From this account of the money, paper, and national debt of England, we proceed to compare it with the money, paper, and national debt of France.

It is very well known that paper has not the same credit in France which it has in England, and that, consequently, there is much less of it. This has naturally operated to increase the quantity of gold and silver in France, and prevent the increase of paper.

The highest estimation of the quantity of gold and silver in England, as already stated, is twenty millions sterling, and the quantity of paper grafted thereon, immense.

The quantity of gold and silver in France is ninety millions sterling, and the quantity of paper grafted thereon, trifling. France, therefore, has a long run of credit in reserve, which England has already expended; and it will naturally follow, that when the government of France and the nation shall adjust their differences by an amicable embrace of each other, that this reserved credit will be brought forth, and the power of France will be doubly increased. The adjustment of these differences is but the business of a day, whenever its government shall see the proper moment for doing it, and nothing would precipitate this event more than a war. The cry of war, from the injudicious provocations given by the British ministry, and the disadvantageous effect of the commercial treaty, is becoming popular in France.

The near situation of France to Spain and Portugal, the two countries which import gold and silver, and her manufactures being better adapted to the warm climate of those countries, than the manufactures of England, give her superior opportunities of drawing money into the nation, and as she has but little trade to the East Indies, the money so drawn in is not drawn

out again as in England. Another advantage is, that from the greatness of her dominions she has no occasion to waste her wealth in hiring foreign troops, as is the practice with England; and a third advantage is, that the money which England squanders in Prussia and other countries on the continent serves to increase the wealth of France, because a considerable part of it centres there, through the medium of her commerce.

Admitting Great Britain and Ireland to contain ten millions of inhabitants, the quantity of money per head is forty shillings; the money per head in France is three pounds fifteen shillings, which is nearly double.

The national debt of England, compared to the whole amount of money in the nation, is as twelve to one, that is, the debt is twelve times greater than all the money amounts to.

The national debt of France, compared to the whole amount of her money, is considerably less than as two are to one, that is, her debt is not so much as twice the amount of her money. France, therefore, as already stated, has an immense credit in reserve whenever the settlement of her present internal differences shall furnish her with the means of employing it, and that period, so much to be dreaded by England, is hastening on.

The annual interest of the national debt of England and France are nearly equal, being *nine millions*^a sterling; but with this difference, that above three millions and a half of the annual interest of France are only life annuities. The interest, therefore, of her debt lessens every year, and she will have a surplus up to the amount of three millions and a half, to apply to the purchase of that part of the debt which is on perpetual interest; therefore, without any new taxes for that purpose, she can discharge her whole debt in less than a third of the time in which it can be done in England, according to Mr. Pitt's plan, with his additional tax of a million a year.

But let the event of Mr. Pitt's plan be what it may, as to reducing the debt, there is one circumstance that cannot fail to accompany it, which is, that of making it the interest of government, in executing this plan, to undermine the interest of its creditors, or the value of the funds, for the purpose of purchasing at a cheaper rate.

The plan is founded on the presumption of a long uninterrupted peace, and that future loans would not be wanted, which cannot now be expected, for France in her turn is getting into a temper for war. The plan naturally strikes at the credit of government, in contracting further debts, for were a loan to be opened to-morrow, the subscribers naturally perceiving that it was the interest of government to undermine them as soon they became creditors, would consequently seek to secure themselves by demanding higher premiums at first. It is a question whether a premium of thirty per cent. is now as good as ten was before, and therefore the plan, in case of a war, instead of lessening the debt, serves to push it more rapidly on.

The minister certainly never understood the natural operation of his plan, or he would not have acted as he has done. The plan has two edges, while he has supposed it to have only one. It strikes at the debt in peace, and at the credit in war.

The gentleman who originally furnished the minister with this plan, now gives it totally up. He knew its operation both in peace and war, but the minister appears not to have comprehended it: but if he has made a mistake, his youth and inexperience must be his apology.

The plan, unless it should be altered, that is given out for providing for the expense of the late armaments, is, in reality, no other than the American plan of paper money, and it is very probable that the minister has received it from some American refugee.

The plan given out is, that the minister is to borrow the *money* of the bank. Here is the delusion. The name of *money* covers the deception. For the case is, that the bank does not lend the real money, but it issues out an emission of bank paper, and the presumption is, that there will be no run upon the bank in consequence of such an extraordinary emission, but if there should, no man can be at a loss in foreseeing the issue.

There are those who remember that on a former run the bank was obliged to prolong the time by paying shillings and sixpences, and it is universally credited that a quantity of silver is now preserved in the bank for the same purpose; but the device, to every person of reflection, shows that the capital is

not equal to the demands, and that the chapter of accidents is part of the bible of the bank.

It may be asked why does not the government issue the paper instead of the bank? The answer is, that it is exactly the same thing in the end, only with this difference in the mode, that were the government to do it, it would be too visible a system of paper currency, and that disguise is necessary.

Having recourse to the bank, is a kind of playing the bank off against the funds. Fighting one kind of paper against another, and in the combat both of them will be sufferers.

In short, the delusion of paper riches is working as rapidly in England as it did in America. A young and inexperienced minister, like a young and inexperienced congress, may suppose that he sees mines of wealth in a printing press, and that a nation cannot be exhausted while there is paper and ink enough to print paper money.—Every new emission, until the delusion bursts, will appear to the nation an increase of wealth. Every merchant's coffers will appear a treasury, and he will swell with paper riches, until he becomes a bankrupt.

When a bank makes too free with its paper, it exposes itself in much the same manner which a government does that makes too free with its power: too much credit is as bad as too little; and there is such a thing as governing too much, as well in a bank, as in government. But nothing exposes a bank more than being under the influence, instead of the protection of government, and whenever either the property or the credit of a bank, can be commanded or influenced by a government, or minister, its destruction is not far off.

We have now stated the comparative condition of England and France, as to money matters. But there yet remains some things necessary to be touched upon.

It is an error very frequently committed in the world to mistake disposition for condition.

France, with a much better permanent condition for war than England, is in a less disposition to enter into one, and this disposition in her is mistaken in England for want of condition: and on the other hand, the apparent disposition in England for war is mistaken by her for a condition to undertake and carry one on.

There appears a uniformity in all the works of nature, from individual animals up to nations. The smaller animals are always the most fretful, passionate, and insulting. They mistake temper for strength, and often fall a sacrifice to vexatious impetuosity ; while larger ones go calmly on, and require repeated provocations to incense them. France may yet be aggravated into a war, and very probably will. Where the condition exists, the disposition may at any time take place. We may create temper, but we cannot create strength.

While the literature of England preserves an honourable rank among the nations of Europe, her national character is most miserably suffering in the world through her newspapers. The most barefaced perfidiousness, the most abandoned principles are daily propagated. A total disregard to all the obligations of national faith and honour are publicly professed. Instead of that true greatness of heart, that generous disdain of vulgar littleness that ought always to accompany the disputes of nations, scarcely any thing is to be seen but mean abuse and low scurrility. This is not the case in any other country in the world but England.

We will now proceed to conclude with a few additional observations on the state of politics.

For several weeks the nation was amused with the daily rumours of some great cabinet secret, and admiring how profoundly the secret was kept, when the only secret was, that there was no secret to divulge.

But this opinion of a secret very well shows that the opinion of the nation was opposed to the opinion of the minister, or the supposition of some great secret would not have taken place, as the affairs of the stadtholder were then publicly known. It shows that the nation did not think the stadtholder of Holland a sufficient reason for laying new taxes on England, and running into the risk and expense of a war, and great was the surprise when the declaration and counter declaration, like twin mice, peeped from the cabinet.

But there is one secret that requires to be investigated, which is, whether the minister did not know that France would not engage in a war, and whether the preparations were not an idle parade, founded on that knowledge.

Whether it was not meanly putting England under the banners of Prussia and taking thereby a dishonourable advan-

tage of the internal perplexity which France was then in, and which in its turn may happen to England, to assume the air of a challenge, which it must be known would not be accepted, because there was nothing to make the acceptance necessary.

Whether this conduct in the minister does not mischievously operate to destroy the harmony that appeared to be growing up between the two nations ; to lessen, if not totally destroy, the advantages of the commercial treaty, and to lay the seeds of future wars, when there was a prospect of a long and uninterrupted peace.

When there are two ways of accomplishing the same object, it almost always happens that the one is better than the other ; and whether the minister has not chosen the worst, a few observations will elucidate.

It signifies not what airy schemes, projects, or even treaties may be formed, especially if done under the point of the bayonet, for all that can be expected of Holland is neutrality. Her trade is with all nations, and it is from her neutrality that this trade has arisen. Destroy this neutrality and Holland is destroyed. Therefore it matters not what sentiments party men may be of in Holland as to the stadtholdership, because there is still a superior banner under which all will unite.

Holland will not expose her trade to the devastations of England by joining France in a war, neither will she expose it to France by joining England. It may very well be asked, what is England or France to Holland, that she should join with either in a war, unless she is compelled to it by one or the other making war upon her, as was the case in the last war ?

Events may soon happen in Europe to make all the force that Prussia can raise necessary to her own defence, and Holland must be wise enough to see, that by joining England, she not only exposes her trade to France but likewise her dominions, because France can invade her in a quarter in which England cannot defend her, for Holland lies open to France by land. It is, therefore, more immediately the interest of Holland to keep on good terms with France ; neither can England give her any equivalent to balance this circumstance. How foolish then are the politics which are directed to unnatural and impossible

objects ! Surely the experience of a century past is sufficient to show to any man, except one of yesterday, what the conduct of Holland in all cases must be.

But there is another circumstance that does not fail to impress foreigners, and especially Holland, which is, that the immensity of the national debt of England, the prospect of its still increasing, and the exorbitancy of her paper currencies, render her too insecure in herself to be much confided in by foreign nations for any length of time. Because that which must happen, may very soon happen.

Concerning the rescript delivered by the French minister, there is one certain explanation to be put upon it, which is, that if France had been disposed for war, she would not have made that communication. The very making it goes to a full explanation of the parts ; and as soon as Mr. Pitt obtained this knowledge, it appeared to him a safe moment to gird on his sword, and when he found that France was as well weaponed as himself, to propose to take it off again. This is in a few words the whole history of the campaign. A war minister in peace, and a piece minister in war. Brave where there is no danger, and prudent when there is any.

The rescript could be nothing else than an explanation, on the part of France, of the situation she conceived herself to be subject to, and the probable consequences that might follow from it. This she was not obliged to make, and therefore her making it was a matter of civil communication towards a power she was at peace with, and which in return entitled her to a similar communication on the part of the British cabinet. All this might have been done without either the expense, the tumult, the provocations, or the ill blood that has been created between the two nations.

The alliance between France and Holland, was formed while the stadtholder was a part of the government, therefore, France could not from that alliance, take a part either for or against him. She could only act when the whole interest of the republic was exposed to a foreign enemy, and it was not certain that this might not be the case.

The rescript, therefore, instead of being taken as a ground for war, was in itself a ground for peace, because it tended to bring on a discussion of all the circumstances of France

and England relative to Holland, which would not have failed to place Holland in a state of neutrality, and that only will be the final event now ; because, independent of all parties, no other is consistent with the whole national interest of that republic.

But this not being done, it is now left to the Dutch to do it for themselves.

An alliance with England, at the same time there is one existing with France, will secure this neutrality, so necessary to the Dutch republic. By this stroke of politics, she will be free from all obligations to join with either in a war, and be guaranteed to both. Her alliance with England will debar England from molesting her trade by sea, and that with France will debar France from the same thing, and likewise from invading her by land in all future cases. There are so many probable circumstances to arise on the continent of Europe, that the situation of Holland requires this safeguard, more especially from France, on account of her land connexion.

The rising greatness of the Russian empire, the probable union of this empire with that of Germany and France, and consequently with Spain, whose interests cannot be separated, and the probability of a rupture between the emperor and the king of Prussia, are matters that cannot fail to impress the Dutch with the necessity of securing themselves by land as well as by sea, and to prevent their being drawn into the quarrels either of England or France.

Upon the whole, as there was a civil as well as an uncivil line of politics to be pursued, every man of humane and generous sentiments must lament it was not chosen.

A disposition for peace was growing up in every part of France, and there appeared at the same time a mutual one rising in England. A silent wish on both sides, was universally expanding itself, that wars, so fatal to the true interest and burdensome by taxes to the subjects of both countries, might exist no more, and that a long and lasting peace might take place.

But instead of cultivating this happy opportunity, the pettish vanity of a young and inexperienced minister, who balanced himself between peace and war to take his choice of circumstances, instead of principles, and who went into an expensive armament when there was none to contend with, and not till after the affairs of Holland might be said to be terminated, has destroyed those

seeds of harmony that might have been considered of more value to both nations than their fleets and armies.

He has permitted the nation to run mad under the universal influence of a groundless belief of vast hostile armaments in the East and West-Indies, and the supposition of a secret that never existed. By this means the sparks of ill-will are afresh kindled up between the nations, the fair prospects of lasting peace, are vanished, and a train of future evils fills up the scene, and that at a time when the internal affairs of France, however confused they at present appear, are naturally approaching to a great and harmonious increase of its power.

THOMAS PAINE.

London, Aug. 1787.



RIGHTS OF MAN.

BEING

AN ANSWER

**TO MR. BURKE'S ATTACK ON THE FRENCH
REVOLUTION.**

PART I.

VOL. II.

6

to
GEORGE WASHINGTON,

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

SIR,

I PRESENT you a small treatise in defence of those principles of freedom which your exemplary virtue hath so eminently contributed to establish. That the rights of man may become as universal as your benevolence can wish, and that you may enjoy the happiness of seeing the new world regenerate the old, is the prayer of

Sir,

Your much obliged, and
Obedient humble servant,
THOMAS PAINE.

RIGHTS OF MAN.



AMONG the incivilities by which nations or individuals provoke and irritate each other, Mr. Burke's pamphlet on the French revolution is an extraordinary instance. Neither the people of France, nor the national assembly, were troubling themselves about the affairs of England, or the English parliament; and why Mr. Burke should commence an unprovoked attack upon them, both in parliament and in public, is a conduct that cannot be pardoned on the score of manners, nor justified on that of policy.

There is scarcely an epithet of abuse to be found in the English language, with which Mr. Burke has not loaded the French nation and the national assembly. Every thing which rancor, prejudice, ignorance or knowledge could suggest, are poured forth in the copious fury of near four hundred pages. In the strain and on the plan Mr. Burke was writing, he might have wrote on to as many thousand. When the tongue or the pen is let loose in a phrenzy of passion, it is the man, and not the subject that becomes exhausted.

Hitherto Mr. Burke has been mistaken and disappointed in the opinions he had formed on the affairs of France; but such is the ingenuity of his hope, or the malignancy of his despair, that it furnishes him with new pretences to go on. There was a time when it was impossible to make Mr. Burke believe there would be any revolution in France. His opinion

then was, that the French had neither spirit to undertake it, nor fortitude to support it; and now that there is one, he seeks an escape by condemning it.

Not sufficiently content with abusing the national assembly, a great part of his work is taken up with abusing Dr. Price (one of the best hearted men that exist) and the two societies in England, known by the name of the Revolution and the Constitutional societies.

Dr. Price had preached a sermon on the 4th of November, 1789, being the anniversary of what is called in England the revolution, which took place in 1688. Mr. Burke, speaking of this sermon, says, "the political divine proceeds dogmatically to assert, that, by the principles of the revolution, the people of England have acquired three fundamental rights:

1st, To choose our own governors.

2d, To cashier them for misconduct

3d, To frame a government for ourselves."

Dr. Price does not say that the right to do these things exists in this or in that person, or in this or in that description of persons, but that it exists in the *whole*—that it is a right resident in the nation. Mr. Burke, on the contrary, denies that such a right exists in the nation, either in whole or in part, or that it exists any where; and what is still more strange and marvellous, he says, that "the people of England utterly disclaim such right, and that they will resist the practical assertion of it with their lives and fortunes." That men will take up arms, and spend their lives and fortunes *not* to maintain their rights, but to maintain that they have *not* rights, is an entire new species of discovery, and suited to the paradoxical genius of Mr. Burke.

The method which Mr. Burke takes to prove that the people of England have no such rights, and that such rights do not exist in the nation, either in whole or in part, or any where at all, is of the same marvellous and monstrous kind with what he has already said; for his arguments are, that the persons, or the generation of persons in whom they did exist, are dead, and with them the right is dead also. To prove this, he quotes a declaration made by parliament about an hundred years ago, to William and Mary, in these words: "The lords spiritual and temporal, and commons, do, in the name of the people afore-

said—(meaning the people of England then living) most humbly and faithfully *submit* themselves, their *heirs* and *posterity* FOR EVER.”—He also quotes a clause of another act of parliament made in the same reign, the terms of which, he says, “bind us—(meaning the people of that day)—our *heirs* and our *posterity*, to *them*, their *heirs* and *posterity*, to the end of time.”

Mr. Burke considers his point sufficiently established by producing those clauses, which he enforces by saying that they exclude the right of the nation *for ever*; and not yet content with making such declarations, repeated over and over again, he further says, “that if the people of England possessed such a right before the revolution” (which he acknowledges to have been the case, not only in England, but throughout Europe at an early period) “yet that the *English nation* did, at the time of the revolution most solemnly renounce and abdicate it, for themselves, and for all their *posterity for ever*.”

As Mr. Burke occasionally applies the poison drawn from his horrid principles (if it is not a profanation to call them by the name of principles) not only to the English nation, but to the French revolution and the national assembly, and charges that august, illuminated and illuminating body of men with the epithet of *usurpers*, I shall, *sans ceremonie*, place another system of principles in opposition to his.

The English parliament of 1688, did a certain thing, which for themselves and their constituents, they had a right to do, and which appeared right should be done; but, in addition to this right, which they possessed by delegation, *they set up another right by assumption*, that of binding and controlling posterity to the end of time. The case, therefore, divides itself into two parts; the right which they possessed by delegation, and the right which they set up by assumption. The first is admitted; but with respect to the second, I reply:—

There never did, nor never can exist a parliament, or any description of men, or any generation of men, in any country, possessed of the right or the power of binding or controlling posterity to the “end of time,” or of commanding for ever how the world shall be governed, or who shall govern it; and therefore all such clauses, acts, or declarations, by which the makers of them attempt to do what they have neither the right nor the power to do, nor the power to execute, are in themselves null and void

Every age and generation must be as free to act for itself, *in all cases*, as the ages and generations which preceded it. The vanity and presumption of governing beyond the grave, is the most ridiculous and insolent of all tyrannies. Man has no property in man; neither has any generation a property in the generations which are to follow. The parliament or the people of 1688, or of any other period, had no more right to dispose of the people of the present day, or to bind or to control them *in any shape whatever*, than the parliament or the people of the present day have to dispose of, bind or control those who are to live an hundred or a thousand years hence. Every generation is and must be competent to all the purposes which its occasions require. It is the living and not the dead, that are to be accommodated. When man ceases to be, his power and his wants cease with him; and having no longer any participation in the concerns of this world, he has no longer any authority in directing who shall be its governors, or how its government shall be organized, or how administered.

I am not contending for, nor against, any form of government, nor for nor against any party, here or elsewhere. That which a whole nation chooses to do, it has a right to do. Mr. Burke denies it. Where then does the right exist? I am contending for the right of the *living*, and against their being willed away, and controlled and contracted for, by the manuscript-assumed authority of the dead; and Mr. Burke is contending for the authority of the dead over the rights and freedom of the living. There was a time when kings disposed of their crowns by will upon their death-beds, and consigned the people, like beasts of the field, to whatever successor they appointed. This is now so exploded as scarcely to be remembered, and so monstrous as hardly to be believed: but the parliamentary clauses upon which Mr. Burke builds his political church, are of the same nature.

The laws of every country must be analogous to some common principle. In England, no parent nor master; nor all the authority of parliament, omnipotent as it has called itself, can bind or control the personal freedom even of an individual beyond the age of twenty-one years: on what ground of right then could the parliament of 1688, or any other parliament, bind all posterity for ever?

Those who have quitted the world, and those who are not arrived yet in it, are as remote from each other as the utmost stretch of mortal imagination can conceive : what possible obligation then can exist between them, what rule or principle can be laid down, that two nonentities, the one out of existence, and the other not in, and who never can meet in this world, that the one should control the other to the end of time ?

In England, it is said that money cannot be taken out of the pockets of the people without their consent ; but who authorized, and who could authorize the parliament of 1688 to control and take away the freedom of posterity, and limit and confine their right of acting in certain cases for ever, who were not in existence to give or withhold their consent ?

A greater absurdity cannot present itself to the understanding of man, than what Mr. Burke offers to his readers. He tells them, and he tells the world to come, that a certain body of men who existed a hundred years ago, made a law, and that there does not now exist in the nation, nor never will, nor never can, a power to alter it.—Under how many subtleties, or absurdities, has the divine right to govern been imposed on the credulity of mankind : Mr. Burke has discovered a new one, and he has shortened his journey to Rome, by appealing to the power of this infallible parliament of former days ; and he produces what it has done as of divine authority ; for that power must be certainly more than human, which no human power to the end of time can alter.

But Mr. Burke has done some service, not to his cause, but to his country, by bringing those clauses into public view. They serve to demonstrate how necessary it is at all times to watch against the attempted encroachment of power, and to prevent its running to excess. It is somewhat extraordinary that the offence for which James II. was expelled, that of setting up power by *assumption*, should be re-acted under another shape and form, by the parliament that expelled him. It shows that the rights of man were but imperfectly understood at the revolution ; for certain it is that the right which that parliament set up by *assumption* (for by delegation it had not, and could not have it, because none could give it) over the persons and freedom of posterity for ever, was of the same tyrannical, unfounded kind which James attempted to set up over the parliament and the nation, and for which he was expelled.

The only difference is, (for in principle they differ not) that the

one was an usurper over the living, and the other over the unborn ; and as the one has no better authority to stand upon than the other, both of them must be equally null and void, and of no effect.

From what or whence, does Mr. Burke prove the right of any human power to bind posterity for ever ? He has produced his clauses ; but he must produce also his proofs that such a right existed, and show how it existed. If it ever existed, it must now exist ; for whatever appertains to the nature of man, cannot be annihilated by man. It is the nature of man to die, and he will continue to die as long as he continues to be born. But Mr. Burke has set up a sort of political Adam, in whom all posterity are bound for ever ; he must therefore prove that his Adam possessed such a power or such a right.

The weaker any cord is, the less it will bear to be stretched, and the worse is the policy to stretch it, unless it is intended to break it. Had a person contemplated the overthrow of Mr. Burke's positions, he would have proceeded as Mr. Burke has done. He would have magnified the authorities, on purpose to have called the *right* of them into question ; and the instant the question of right was started, the authorities must have been given up.

It requires but a very small glance of thought to perceive, that although laws made in one generation often continue in force through succeeding generations, yet they continue to derive their force from the consent of the living. A law not repealed continues in force, not because it *cannot* be repealed, but because it *is not* repealed ; and the non-repealing passes for consent.

But Mr. Burke's clauses have not even this qualification in their favour. They become null, by attempting to become immortal. The nature of them precludes consent. They destroy the right which they *might* have, by grounding it on a right which they *cannot* have. Immortal power is not a human right, and therefore cannot be a right of parliament. The parliament of 1688 might as well have passed an act to have authorized itself to live for ever, as to make their authority live for ever. All, therefore, that can be said of them is, that they are a formality of words, of as much import, as if those who used them had addressed a congratulation to themselves, and, in the oriental style of antiquity, had said, O ! parliament, live for ever !

The circumstances of the world are continually changing, and the opinions of men change also ; and as government is for the

living, and not for the dead, it is the living only that has any right in it. That which may be thought right and found convenient in one age, may be thought wrong and found inconvenient in another. In such cases, who is to decide, the living, or the dead?

As almost one hundred pages of Mr. Burke's book are employed upon these clauses, it will consequently follow, that if the clauses themselves, so far as they set up an *assumed, usurped* dominion over posterity for ever, are unauthoritative, and in their nature null and void, that all his voluminous inferences and declamation drawn therefrom, or founded thereon, are null and void also : and on this ground I rest the matter.

We now come more particularly to the affairs of France. Mr. Burke's book has the appearance of being written as instruction to the French nation ; but if I may permit myself the use of an extravagant metaphor, suited to the extravagance of the case, it is darkness attempting to illuminate light.

While I am writing this, there is accidentally before me some proposals for a declaration of rights by the marquis de la Fayette (I ask his pardon for using his former address, and do it only for distinction's sake) to the national assembly on the 11th of July 1789, three days before the taking of the Bastile ; and I cannot but be struck how opposite the sources are from which that gentleman and Mr. Burke draw their principles. Instead of referring to musty records and mouldy parchments, to prove that the rights of the living are lost, "renounced and abdicated for ever" by those who are now no more, as Mr. Burke has done, M. de la Fayette applies to the living world, and emphatically says, "Call to mind the sentiments which nature has engraved in the heart of every citizen, and which take a new force when they are solemnly recognized by all :—for a nation to love liberty, it is sufficient that she knows it ; and to be free, it is sufficient that she wills it." How dry, barren and obscure, is the source from which Mr. Burke labours ; and how ineffectual, though embellished with flowers, is all his declamation and his argument, compared with these clear, concise and soul-animating sentiments : few and short as they are, they lead on to a vast field of generous and manly thinking, and do not finish, like Mr. Burke's periods, with music in the ear and nothing in the heart.

As I have introduced the mention of M. de la Fayette, I will take the liberty of adding an anecdote respecting his farewell ad-

dress to the congress of America in 1783, and which occurred fresh to my mind when I saw Mr. Burke's thundering attack on the French revolution.—M. de la Fayette went to America at an early period of the war, and continued a volunteer in her service to the end. His conduct through the whole of that enterprise is one of the most extraordinary that is to be found in the history of a young man, scarcely then twenty years of age. Situated in a country that was like the lap of sensual pleasure, and with the means of enjoying it, how few are there to be found that would exchange such a scene for the woods and wilderness of America, and pass the flowery years of youth in unprofitable danger and hardship! But such is the fact. When the war ended, and he was on the point of taking his final departure, he presented himself to congress, and contemplating, in his affectionate farewell, the revolution he had seen, expressed himself in these words: "*May this great monument raised to Liberty, serve as a lesson to the oppressor, and an example to the oppressed!*" When this address came to the hands of Dr. Franklin, who was then in France, he applied to count Vergennes to have it inserted in the French gazette, but never could obtain his consent. The fact was, that count Vergennes was an aristocratical despot, at home, and dreaded the example of the American revolution in France, as certain other persons now dread the example of the French revolution in England; and Mr. Burke's tribute of fear (for in this light it must be considered) runs parallel with count Vergennes' refusal. But to return more particularly to his work.

"We have seen (says Mr. Burke) the French rebel against a mild and lawful monarch, with more fury, outrage and insult, than any people has been known to raise against the most illegal usurper, or the most sanguinary tyrant."—This is one among a thousand other instances, in which Mr. Burke shows that he is ignorant of the springs and principles of the French revolution

It was not against Louis XVI. but against the despotic principle of the government, that the nation revolted. These principles had not their origin in him, but in the original establishment, many centuries back; and they were become too deeply rooted to be removed, and the Augean stable of parasites and plunderers too abominably filthy to be cleansed, by any thing short of complete and universal revolution.

When it becomes necessary to do a thing, the whole heart should join in the measure, or it should not be attempted. That crisis was then arrived, and there remained no choice but to act with determined vigor, or not to act at all. The king was known to be the friend of the nation, and this circumstance was favorable to the enterprise. Perhaps no man bred up in the style of an absolute king, ever possessed a heart so little disposed to the exercise of that species of power as the present king of France. But the principles of the government itself still remained the same. The monarch and monarchy were distinct and separate things ; and it was against the established despotism of the latter, and not against the person or principles of the former, that the revolt commenced, and the revolution has been carried on.

Mr. Burke does not attend to this distinction between men and principles, and therefore he does not see that a revolt may take place against the despotism of the latter, while there lies no charge of despotism against the former.

+ The natural moderation of Louis XVI. contributed nothing to alter the hereditary despotism of the monarchy. All the tyrannies of former reigns, acted under that hereditary despotism, were still liable to be revived in the hands of a successor. It was not the respite of a reign that would satisfy France, enlightened as she was then become. A casual discontinuance of the *practice* of despotism, is not a discontinuance of its *principles*; the former depends on the virtue of the individual who is in immediate possession of the power ; the latter, on the virtue and fortitude of the nation. In the case of Charles I. and James II. of England, the revolt was against the personal despotism of the men ; whereas in France, it was against the hereditary despotism of the established government. But men who can consign over the rights of posterity for ever on the authority of a mouldy parchment, like Mr. Burke, are not qualified to judge of this revolution. It takes in a field too vast for their views to explore and proceeds with a mightiness of reason they cannot keep pace with.

But there are many points of view in which this revolution may be considered. When despotism has established itself for ages in a country, as in France, it is not in the person of the king only that it resides. It has the appearance of being so in show, and in nominal authority ; but it is not so in practice, and in fact It

has its standard every where. Every office and department has its despotism, founded upon custom and usage. Every place has its Bastile, and every Bastile its despot. The original hereditary despotism resident in the person of the king, divides and sub-divides itself into a thousand shapes and forms, till at last the whole of it is acted by deputation.—This was the case in France; and against this species of despotism, proceeding on through an endless labyrinth of office till the source of it is scarcely perceptible, there is no mode of redress. It strengthens itself by assuming the appearance of duty, and tyrannizes under the pretence of obeying.

When a man reflects on the condition which France was in from the nature of her government, he will see other causes for revolt than those which immediately connect themselves with the person or character of Louis XVI.—There were, if I may so express it, a thousand despotisms to be reformed in France, which had grown up under the hereditary despotism of the monarchy, and become so rooted as to be in a great measure independent of it. Between the monarchy, the parliament, and the church, there was a *rivalship* of despotism: besides the feudal despotism operating locally, and the ministerial despotism operating every where. But Mr. Burke, by considering the king as the only possible object of a revolt, speaks as if France was a village, in which every thing that passed must be known to its commanding officer, and no oppression could be acted but what he could immediately control. Mr. Burke might have been in the Bastile his whole life, as well under Louis XVI. as Louis XIV. and neither the one nor the other have known that such a man as Mr. Burke existed. The despotic principles of the government were the same in both reigns, though the dispositions of the men were as remote as tyranny and benevolence.

What Mr. Burke considers as a reproach to the French revolution, that of bringing it forward under a reign more mild than the preceding ones, is one of its highest honors. The revolutions that have taken place in other European countries, have been excited by personal hatred. The rage was against the man, and he became the victim.—But, in the instance of France, we see a revolution generated in the rational contemplation of the rights of man, and distinguishing from the beginning between persons and principles.

But Mr. Burke appears to have no idea of principles, when he is contemplating governments. "Ten years ago," says he, "I could have felicitated France on her having a government, without inquiring what the nature of that government was or how it was administered." Is this the language of a rational man? Is it the language of a heart feeling as it ought to feel for the rights and happiness of the human race? On this ground, Mr. Burke must compliment every government in the world, while the victims who suffer under them, whether sold into slavery or tortured out of existence, are wholly forgotten. It is power, and not principles, that Mr. Burke venerates; and under this abominable depravity, he is disqualified to judge between them. Thus much for his opinion as to the occasion of the French revolution. I now proceed to other considerations.

I know a place in America called Point-no-Point; because as you proceed along the shore, gay and flowery as Mr. Burke's language, it continually recedes, and presents itself at a distance a-head; and when you have got as far as you can go, there is no point at all. Just thus is it with Mr. Burke's three hundred and fifty-six pages. It is therefore difficult to reply to him. But as the points that he wishes to establish may be inferred from what he abuses, it is in his paradoxes that we must look for his arguments.

As to the tragic paintings by which Mr. Burke has outraged his own imagination, and seeks to work upon that of his readers, they are very well calculated for theatrical representation, where facts are manufactured for the sake of show, and accommodated to produce, through the weakness of sympathy, a weeping effect. But Mr. Burke should recollect that he is writing history, and not *plays*; and that his readers will expect truth, and not the spouting rant of high-toned declamation.

When we see a man dramatically lamenting in a publication intended to be believed, that "*The age of chivalry is gone*;" that "*the glory of Europe is extinguished forever!*" that "*the unbought grace of life* (if any one knows what it is,) *the cheap defence of nations, the nurse of manly sentiment and heroic enterprise is gone!*" And all this because the Quixotic age of chivalric nonsense is gone, what opinion can we form of his judgment, or what regard can we pay to his facts? In the rhapsody of his imagination, he has discovered a world of windmills, and his sorrows are,

that there are no Quixotes to attack them. But if the age of aristocracy, like that of chivalry, should fall, and they had originally some connexion, Mr. Burke, the trumpeter of the order, may continue his parody to the end, and finish with exclaiming—
‘Othello’s occupation’s gone!’”

Notwithstanding Mr. Burke’s horrid paintings, when the French revolution is compared with that of other countries, the astonishment will be, that it is marked with so few sacrifices; but this astonishment will cease when we reflect that it was *principles*, and not *persons*, that were the meditated objects of destruction. The mind of the nation was acted upon by a higher stimulus than what the consideration of persons could inspire, and sought a higher conquest than could be produced by the downfall of an enemy.—Among the few who fell, there do not appear to be any that were intentionally singled out. They all of them had their fate in the circumstances of the moment, and were not pursued with that long, cold-blooded, unabated revenge which pursued the unfortunate Scotch, in the affair of 1745.

Through the whole of Mr. Burke’s book I do not observe that the Bastile is mentioned more than once, and that with a kind of implication as if he was sorry it is pulled down, and wished it was built up again. “We have rebuilt Newgate (says he) and tenanted the mansion; and we have prisons almost as strong as the Bastile for those who dare to libel the queen of France.”* As to what a madman, like the person called Lord George Gordon, might say, and to whom Newgate is rather a bedlam than a prison, it is unworthy a rational consideration. It was a madman that libelled—and that is sufficient apology, and it afforded an opportunity for confining him, which was the thing wished for: but certain it is that Mr. Burke, who does not call himself a madman, whatever other people may do, has libelled, in the most unprovoked manner, and in the grossest style of the most vulgar abuse, the whole representative authority of France; and yet Mr. Burke takes his

* Since writing the above, two other places occur in Mr. Burke’s pamphlet in which the name of Bastile is mentioned but in the same manner. In the one, he introduces it in a sort of obscure question, and asks—“Will any ministers who now serve such a king with but a decent appearance of respect, cordially obey the orders of those whom but the other day, in his name, they had committed to the Bastile?” in the other the taking it is mentioned as implying criminality in the French guards who assisted in demolishing it.—“They have not,” says he, “forgot the taking the king’s castles at Paris. This is Mr. Burke, who pretends to write on constitutional freedom.

seat in the British house of commons!—From his violence and his grief, his silence on some points and his excess on others, it is difficult not to believe that Mr. Burke is sorry, extremely sorry, that arbitrary power, the power of the pope and the Bastile, are pulled down.

Not one glance of compassion, not one commiserating reflection, that I can find throughout his book, has he bestowed on those that lingered out the most wretched of lives, a life without hope, in the most miserable of prisons. It is painful to behold a man employing his talents to corrupt himself. Nature has been kinder to Mr. Burke than he has to her. He is not affected by the reality of distress touching upon his heart, but by the showy resemblance of it striking his imagination. He pities the plumage, but forgets the dying bird. Accustomed to kiss the aristocratical hand that hath purloined him from himself, he degenerates into a composition of art, and the genuine soul of nature forsakes him. His hero or his heroine must be a tragedy-victim, expiring in show, and not the real prisoner of misery, sliding into death in the silence of a dungeon.

As Mr. Burke has passed over the whole transaction of the Bastile (and his silence is nothing in his favour) and has entertained his readers with reflections on supposed facts, distorted into real falsehoods, I will give, since he has not, some account of the circumstances which preceded that transaction. They will serve to show that less mischief could scarce have accompanied such an event, when considered with the treacherous and hostile aggravations of the enemies of the revolution.

The mind can hardly picture to itself a more tremendous scene than what the city of Paris exhibited at the time of taking the Bastile, and for two days before and after, nor conceive the possibility of its quieting so soon. At a distance, this transaction has appeared only as an act of heroism standing on itself: and the close political connexion it had with the revolution is lost in the brilliancy of the achievement. But we are to consider it as the strength of the parties, brought man to man, and contending for the issue. The Bastile was to be either the prize or the prison of the assailants. The downfall of it included the idea of the downfall of despotism; and this compounded image was become as figuratively united, as Bunyan's Doubting Castle and giant Despair.

The national assembly before and at the time of taking the Bastile, was sitting at Versailles, twelve miles distant from Paris. About a week before the rising of the Parisians and their taking the Bastile, it was discovered that a plot was forming, at the head of which was the count d'Artois, the king's youngest brother, for demolishing the national assembly, seizing its members, and thereby crushing, by a *coup de main*, all hopes and prospects of forming a free government. For the sake of humanity, as well as of freedom, it is well this plan did not succeed. Examples are not wanting to show how dreadfully vindictive and cruel are all old governments, when they are successful against what they call a revolt.

This plan must have been some time in contemplation ; because, in order to carry it into execution, it was necessary to collect a large military force round Paris, and to cut off the communication between that city and the national assembly at Versailles. The troops destined for this service were chiefly the foreign troops in the pay of France, and who, for this particular purpose, were drawn from the distant provinces where they were then stationed. When they were collected, to the amount of between twenty-five and thirty thousand, it was judged time to put the plan in execution. The ministry who were then in office, and who were friendly to the revolution, were instantly dismissed, and a new ministry formed of those who had concerted the project :—among whom was count de Broglio, and to his share was given the command of those troops. The character of this man, as described to me in a letter which I communicated to Mr. Burke before he began to write his book, and from an authority which Mr. Burke well knows was good, was that of “ a high-flying aristocrat, cool, and capable of every mischief.”

While these matters were agitating, the national assembly stood in the most perilous and critical situation that a body of men can be supposed to act in. They were the devoted victims, and they knew it. They had the hearts and wishes of their country on their side, but military authority they had none. The guards of Broglio surrounded the hall where the assembly sat, ready, at the word of command, to seize their persons, as had been done the year before to the parliament in Paris. Had the national assembly deserted their trust, or had they exhibited signs of weakness or fear, their enemies had been encouraged, and the country depressed.

When the situation they stood in, the cause they were engaged in, and the crisis then ready to burst which should determine their personal and political fate, and that of their country, and probably of Europe, are taken into one view, none but a heart callous with prejudice, or corrupted by dependance, can avoid interesting itself in their success.

The archbishop of Vienne was at this time president of the national assembly ; a person too old to undergo the scene that a few days, or a few hours, might bring forth. A man of more activity, and bolder fortitude, was necessary ; and the national assembly chose (under the form of vice-president, for the presidency still rested in the archbishop) M. de la Fayette ; and this is the only instance of a vice-president being chosen. It was at the moment this storm was pending, July 11, that a declaration of rights was brought forward by M. de la Fayette, and is the same which is alluded to in page 51. It was hastily drawn up, and makes only a part of a more extensive declaration of rights, agreed upon and adopted afterwards by the national assembly. The particular reason for bringing it forward at this moment (M. de la Fayette has since informed me) was, that if the national assembly should fall in the threatened destruction that then surrounded it, some trace of its principles might have a chance of surviving the wreck.

Every thing was now drawing to a crisis. The event was freedom or slavery. On one side an army of nearly thirty thousand men ; on the other an unarmed body of citizens, for the citizens of Paris on whom the national assembly must then immediately depend, were as unarmed and undisciplined as the citizens of London are now. The French guards had given strong symptoms of their being attached to the national cause ; but their numbers were small, not a tenth part of the force which Broglio commanded, and their officers were in the interest of Broglio.

Matters being now ripe for execution, the new ministry made their appearance in office. The reader will carry in his mind, that the Bastile was taken the 14th of July : the point of time I am now speaking to, is the 12th. As soon as the news of the change of the ministry reached Paris in the afternoon, all the play-houses and places of entertainment, shops and houses, were shut up. The change of ministry was considered as the prelude of hostilities, and the opinion was rightly founded.

The foreign troops began to advance towards the city. The prince de Lambesc, who commanded a body of German cavalry, approached by the palace of Louis XV. which connects itself with some of the streets. In his march he insulted and struck an old man with his sword. The French are remarkable for their respect to old age, and the insolence with which it appeared to be done, uniting with the general fermentation they were in, produced a powerful effect, and a cry of *to arms ! to arms !* spread itself in a moment over the whole city.

Arms they had none, nor scarcely any who knew the use of them ; but desperate resolution, when every hope is at stake, supplies, for a while, the want of arms. Near where the prince de Lambesc was drawn up, were large piles of stones collected for building the new bridge, and with these the people attacked the cavalry. A party of the French guards, upon hearing the firing, rushed from their quarters and joined the people ; and night coming on, the cavalry retreated.

The streets of Paris, being narrow, are favourable for defence ; and the loftiness of the houses, consisting of many stories, from which great annoyance might be given, secured them against nocturnal enterprises ; and the night was spent in providing themselves with every sort of weapon they could make or procure : guns, swords, blacksmith's hammers, carpenters' axes, iron crows, pikes, halberds, pitchforks, spits, clubs, &c.

The incredible numbers with which they assembled the next morning, and the still more incredible resolution they exhibited embarrassed and astonished their enemies. Little did the new ministry expect such a salute. Accustomed to slavery themselves, they had no idea that liberty was capable of such inspiration, or that a body of unarmed citizens would dare to face the military force of thirty thousand men. Every moment of this day was employed in collecting arms, concerting plans, and arranging themselves in the best order which such an instantaneous movement could afford. Broglio continued lying round the city, but made no further advances this day, and the succeeding night passed with as much tranquillity as such a scene could possibly produce.

But the defence only was not the object of the citizens. They had a cause at stake, on which depended their freedom or their slavery. They every moment expected an attack, or to hear of

one made on the national assembly ; and in such a situation, the most prompt measures are sometimes the best. The object that now presented itself, was the Bastile ; and the *eclat* of carrying such a fortress in the face of such an army, could not fail to strike terror into the new ministry, who had scarcely yet had time to meet. By some intercepted correspondence this morning, it was discovered that the mayor of Paris, M. de Flesseles, who appeared to be in their interest, was betraying them ; and from this discovery there remained no doubt that Broglio would reinforce the Bastile the ensuing evening. It was therefore necessary to attack it that day ; but before this could be done, it was first necessary to procure a better supply of arms than they were then possessed of.

There was, adjoining to the city, a large magazine of arms deposited at the hospital of the invalids, which the citizens summoned to surrender ; and as the place was not defensible, nor attempted much defence, they soon succeeded. Thus supplied, they marched to attack the Bastile ; a vast mixed multitude of all ages and of all degrees, and armed with all sorts of weapons. Imagination would fail of describing to itself the appearance of such a procession, and of the anxiety for the events which a few hours or a few minutes might produce. What plans the ministry was forming, were as unknown to the people within the city, as what the citizens were doing was unknown to them ; and what movements Broglio might make for the support or relief of the place, were to the citizens equally unknown. All was mystery and hazard.

That the Bastile was attacked with an enthusiasm of heroism, such only as the highest animation of liberty could inspire, and carried in the space of a few hours, is an event which the world is fully possessed of. I am not undertaking a detail of the attack, but bringing into view the conspiracy against the nation which provoked it, and which fell with the Bastile. The prison to which the new ministry were dooming the national assembly, in addition to its being the high altar and castle of despotism, became the proper object to begin with. This enterprize broke up the new ministry, who began now to fly from the ruin they had prepared for others. The troops of Broglio dispersed, and himself fled also.

Mr. Burke has spoken a great deal about plots, but he has never once spoken of this plot against the national assembly and the

liberties of the nation ; and that he might not, he has passed over all the circumstances that might throw it in his way. The exiles who have fled from France, whose cause he so much interests himself in, and from whom he has had his lesson, fled in consequence of the miscarriage of this plot. No plot was formed against them : it was they who were plotting against others ; and those who fell, met, not unjustly, the punishment they were preparing to execute. But will Mr. Burke say that if this plot, contrived with the subtlety of an ambuscade, had succeeded, the successful party would have restrained their wrath so soon ? Let the history of all old governments answer the question.

Whom has the national assembly brought to the scaffold ? None. They were themselves the devoted victims of this plot, and they have not retaliated ; why then are they charged with revenge they have not acted ? In the tremendous breaking forth of a whole people, in which all degrees, tempers and characters are confounded, and delivering themselves by a miracle of exertion, from the destruction meditated against them, is it to be expected that nothing will happen ? When men are sore with the sense of oppressions, and menaced with the prospect of new ones, is the calmness of philosophy, or the palsy of insensibility to be looked for ? Mr. Burke exclaims against outrage, yet the greatest is that which he has committed. His book is a volume of outrage, not apologized for by the impulse of a moment, but cherished through a space of ten months ; yet Mr. Burke had no provocation, no life, no interest at stake.

More citizens fell in this struggle than of their opponents ; but four or five persons were seized by the populace, and instantly put to death ; the governor of the Bastille and the mayor of Paris, who was detected in the act of betraying them ; and afterwards Foulon, one of the new ministry, and Berthier, his son-in-law who had accepted the office of intendant of Paris. Their heads were stuck upon pikes, and carried about the city ; and it is upon this mode of punishment that Mr. Burke builds a great part of his tragic scenes. Let us therefore examine how men came by the idea of punishing in this manner.

They learn it from the governments they live under ; and retaliate the punishments they have been accustomed to behold. The heads stuck upon pikes which remained for years upon Temple-bar, differed nothing in the horror of the scene from those carried

about on pikes at Paris : yet this was done by the English government. It may, perhaps, be said, that it signifies nothing to a man what is done to him after he is dead ; but it signifies much to the living : it either tortures their feelings or hardens their hearts ; and in either case, it instructs them how to punish when power falls into their hands.

Lay then the axe to the root, and teach governments humanity. It is their sanguinary punishments which corrupt mankind. In England, the punishment in certain cases is, by *hanging, drawing and quartering* ; the heart of the sufferer is cut out, and held up to the view of the populace. In France, under the former government, the punishments were not less barbarous. Who does not remember the execution of Damien, torn to pieces by horses ? The effect of these cruel spectacles exhibited to the populace, is to destroy tenderness or excite revenge ; and by the base and false idea of governing men by terror instead of reason, they become precedents. It is over the lowest class of mankind that government by terror is intended to operate, and it is on them that it operates to the worst effect. They have sense enough to feel that they are the objects aimed at ; and they inflict in their turn the examples of terror they have been instructed to practice.

There are in all European countries, a large class of people of that description which in England are called the "*mob*." Of this class were those who committed the burnings and devastations in London in 1780, and of this class were those who carried the neads upon pikes in Paris. Foulon and Berthier were taken up in the country, and sent to Paris to undergo their examination at the hotel de Ville ; for the national assembly, immediately on the new ministry coming into office, passed a decree, which they communicated to the king and cabinet, that they (the national assembly) would hold the ministry, of which Foulon was one, responsible for the measures they were advising and pursuing ; but the mob, incensed at the appearance of Foulon and Berthier, tore them from their conductors before they were carried to the hotel de Ville, and executed them on the spot. Why then does Mr. Burke charge outrages of this kind upon a whole people ? As well may he charge the riots and outrages of 1780 on all the people of London, or those in Ireland on all his country.

But every thing we see or hear offensive to our feelings, and derogatory to the human character, should lead to other reflections than those of reproach. Even the beings who commit them have some claim to our consideration. How then is it that such vast classes of mankind as are distinguished by the appellation of the vulgar, or the ignorant mob, are so numerous in all old countries? The instant we ask ourselves this question, reflection finds an answer. They arise, as an unavoidable consequence, out of the ill construction of all the old governments in Europe, England included with the rest. It is by distortedly exalting some men, that others are distortedly debased, till the whole is out of nature. A vast mass of mankind are degradedly thrown into the back ground of the human picture, to bring forward, with greater glare, the puppet-show of state and aristocracy. In the commencement of a revolution, those men are rather the followers of the *camp* than of the *standard* of liberty, and have yet to be instructed how to reverence it.

I give to Mr. Burke all his theatrical exaggerations for facts, and I then ask him, if they do not establish the certainty of what I nere lay down? Admitting them to be true, they show the necessity of the French revolution, as much as any one thing he could have asserted. These outrages are not the effect of the principles of the revolution, but of the degraded mind that existed before the revolution, and which the revolution is calculated to reform. Place them then to their proper cause, and take the reproach of them to your own side.

It is to the honor of the national assembly, and the city of Paris, that during such a tremendous scene of arms and confusion, beyond the control of all authority, that they have been able, by the influence of example and exhortation, to restrain so much. Never was more pains taken to instruct and enlighten mankind, and to make them see that their interest consisted in their virtue, and not in their revenge, than what have been displayed in the revolution of France.—I now proceed to make some remarks on Mr. Burke's account of the expedition to Versailles, on the 5th and 6th of October.

I can consider Mr. Burke's book in scarcely any other light than a dramatic performance; and he must, I think, have considered it in the same light himself, by the poetical liberties he has taken of omitting some facts, distorting others, and making the

machinery bend to produce a stage effect. Of this kind is his account of the expedition to Versailles. He begins this account by omitting the only facts which, as causes, are known to be true; every thing beyond these is conjecture even in Paris: and he then works up a tale accommodated to his own passions and prejudices.

It is to be observed throughout Mr. Burke's book, that he never speaks of plots *against* the revolution; and it is from those plots that all the mischiefs have arisen. It suits his purpose to exhibit consequences without their causes. It is one of the arts of the drama to do so. If the crimes of men were exhibited with their suffering, the stage effect would sometimes be lost, and the audience would be inclined to approve where it was intended they should commiserate.

After all the investigations that have been made into this intricate affair (the expedition to Versailles,) it still remains enveloped in all that kind of mystery which ever accompanies events produced more from a concurrence of awkward circumstances, than from fixed design. While the characters of men are forming, as is always the case in revolutions, there is a reciprocal suspicion, and a disposition to misinterpret each other; and even parties directly opposite in principle, will sometimes concur in pushing forward the same movement with very different views, and with the hopes of its producing very different consequences. A great deal of this may be discovered in this embarrassed affair, and yet the issue of the whole was what nobody had in view.

The only things certainly known are, that considerable uneasiness was at this time excited in Paris, by the delay of the king in not sanctioning and forwarding the decrees of the national assembly, particularly that of the *declaration of the rights of man*, and the decrees of the *fourth of August*, which contained the foundation principles on which the constitution was to be erected. The kindest, and perhaps the fairest, conjecture upon this matter is, that some of the ministers intended to make observations upon certain parts of them, before they were finally sanctioned and sent to the provinces; but be this as it may, the enemies of the revolution derived hopes from the delay, and the friends of the revolution, uneasiness.

During this state of suspense, the *gardes du corps*, which was composed, as such regiments generally are, of persons much.

connected with the court, gave an entertainment at Versailles (Oct. 1,) to some foreign regiments then arrived; and when the entertainment was at its height, on a signal given, the *gardes du corps* tore the national cockade from their hats, trampled it under foot, and replaced it with a counter cockade prepared for the purpose. An indignity of this kind amounted to defiance. It was like declaring war; and if men will give challenges, they must expect consequences. But all this Mr. Burke has carefully kept out of sight. He begins his account by saying, "History will record, that on the morning of the 6th of October, 1789, the king and queen of France, after a day of confusion, alarm, dismay and slaughter, lay down under the pledged security of public faith, to indulge nature in a few hours of respite, and troubled melancholy repose." This is neither the sober style of history, nor the intention of it. It leaves every thing to be guessed at, and mistaken. One would at least think there had been a battle; and a battle there probably would have been, had it not been for the moderating prudence of those whom Mr. Burke involves in his censures. By his keeping the *gardes du corps* out of sight Mr. Burke has afforded himself the dramatic licence of putting the king and queen in their places, as if the object of the expedition was against them.—But, to return to my account—

This conduct of the *gardes du corps*, as might well be expected, alarmed and enraged the Parisians: the colors of the cause and the cause itself, were become too united to mistake the intention of the insult, and the Parisians were determined to call the *gardes du corps* to an account. There was certainly nothing of the cowardice of assassination in marching in the face of day to demand satisfaction, if such a phrase may be used, of a body of armed men who had voluntarily given defiance. But the circumstance which serves to throw this affair into embarrassment is, that the enemies of the revolution appear to have encouraged it, as well as its friends. The one hoped to prevent a civil war, by checking it in time, and the other to make one. The hopes of those opposed to the revolution, rested in making the king of their party, and getting him from Versailles to Metz, where they expected to collect a force, and set up a standard. We have therefore two different objects presenting themselves at the same time, and to be accomplished by the same means; the one, to chastise the *gardes du corps* which was the object of the Parisians; the

other, to render the confusion of such a scene an inducement to the king to set off for Metz.

On the 5th of October, a very numerous body of women, and men in the disguise of women, collected round the hotel de Ville, or town hall, at Paris, and set off for Versailles. Their professed object was the *gardes du corps*; but prudent men readily recollected that mischief is easier begun than ended; and this impressed itself with the more force, from the suspicions already stated, and the irregularity of such a cavalcade. As soon therefore as a sufficient force could be collected, M. de la Fayette, by orders from the civil authority of Paris, set off after them at the head of twenty thousand of the Paris militia. The revolution could derive no benefit from confusion, and its opposers might. By an amiable and spirited manner of address, he had hitherto been fortunate in calming disquietudes, and in this he was extraordinarily successful; to frustrate, therefore, the hopes of those who might seek to improve this scene into a sort of justifiable necessity for the king's quitting Versailles and withdrawing to Metz and to prevent, at the same time, the consequences that might ensue between the *gardes du corps* and this phalanx of men and women, he forwarded expresses to the king, that he was on his march to Versailles, by the orders of the civil authority of Paris, for the purpose of peace and protection, expressing at the same time the necessity of restraining the *gardes du corps* from firing on the people.*

He arrived at Versailles between ten and eleven o'clock at night. The *gardes du corps* were drawn up, and the people had arrived some time before, but every thing had remained suspended. Wisdom and policy now consisted in changing a scene of danger into a happy event. M. de la Fayette became the mediator between the enraged parties; and the king, to remove the uneasiness which had arisen from the delay already stated, sent for the president of the national assembly, and signed the *declaration of the rights of man*, and such other parts of the constitution as were in readiness.

It was now about one in the morning. Every thing appeared to be composed, and a general congratulation took place. At the beat of drum a proclamation was made, that the citizens of

* I am warranted in asserting this, as I had it from M. de la Fayette, with whom I have lived in habits of friendship for fourteen years.

Versailles would give the hospitality of their houses to their fellow-citizens of Paris. Those who could not be accommodated in this manner, remained in the streets, or took up their quarters in the churches; and at two o'clock the king and queen retired.

In this state matters passed until the break of day, when a fresh disturbance arose from the censurable conduct of some of both parties; for such characters there will be in all such scenes. One of the *gardes du corps* appeared at one of the windows of the palace, and the people who had remained during the night in the streets accosted him with reviling and provocative language. Instead of retiring, as in such a case prudence would have dictated, he presented his musket, fired, and killed one of the Paris militia. The peace being thus broken, the people rushed into the palace in quest of the offender. They attacked the quarters of the *gardes du corps* within the palace, and pursued them through the avenues of it, and to the apartments of the king. On this tumult, not the queen only, as Mr. Burke has represented it, but every person in the palace, was awakened and alarmed; and M. de la Fayette had a second time to interpose between the parties, the event of which was, that the *gardes du corps* put on the national cockade, and the matter ended, as by oblivion, after the loss of two or three lives.

During the latter part of the time in which this confusion was acting, the king and queen were in public at the balcony, and neither of them concealed for safety's sake, as Mr. Burke insinuates. Matters being thus appeased, and tranquillity restored, a general acclamation broke forth, of *le roi a Paris—le roi a Paris*—the king to Paris. It was the shout of peace, and immediately accepted on the part of the king. By this measure, all future projects of trepanning the king to Metz, and setting up the standard of opposition to the constitution were prevented, and the suspicions extinguished. The king and his family reached Paris in the evening, and were congratulated on their arrival by M. Bailley, the mayor of Paris, in the name of the citizens. Mr. Burke, who throughout his book confounds things, persons, and principles, has, in his remarks on M. Bailley's address, confounded time also. He censures M. Bailley for calling it, "*un bon jour*," a good day. Mr. Burke should have informed himself, that this scene took up the space of two days, the day on which it began with every appearance of danger and mischief, and the

day on which it terminated without the mischiefs that threatened; and that it is to this peaceful termination that M. Bailley alludes, and to the arrival of the king at Paris. Not less than three hundred thousand persons arranged themselves in the procession from Versailles to Paris, and not an act of molestation was committed during the whole march.

Mr. Burke, on the authority of M. Lally Tollendal, a deserter from the national assembly, says, that on entering Paris, the people shouted, "*tous les eveques a la lanterne.*" All bishops to be hanged at the lantern or lamp-posts. It is surprising that nobody should hear this but Lally Tollendal, and that nobody should believe it but Mr. Burke. It has not the least connexion with any part of the transaction, and is totally foreign to every circumstance of it. The bishops have never been introduced before into any scene of Mr. Burke's drama: why then are they, all at once, and together, *tout a coup et tous ensemble*, introduced now? Mr. Burke brings forward his bishops and his lantern, like figures in a magic lantern, and raises his scenes by contrast instead of connexion. But it serves to show, with the rest of his book, what little credit ought to be given, where even probability is set at defiance, for the purpose of defaming; and with this reflection, instead of a soliloquy in praise of chivalry, as Mr. Burke has done, I close the account of the expedition to Versailles.*

I have now to follow Mr. Burke through a pathless wilderness of rhapsodies, and a sort of descant upon governments, in which he asserts whatever he pleases, on the presumption of its being believed, without offering either evidence or reasons for so doing.

Before any thing can be reasoned upon to a conclusion, certain facts, principles, or data, to reason from, must be established, admitted, or denied. Mr. Burke, with his usual outrage, abuses the *declaration of the rights of man*, published by the national assembly of France, as the basis on which the constitution of France is built. This he calls "paltry and blurred sheets of paper about the rights of man." Does Mr. Burke mean to deny that *man* has any rights? If he does, then he must mean that

* An account of the expedition to Versailles may be seen in No. 13, of the 'Revolution de Paris,' containing the events from the 3d to the 10th of October, 1789

there are no such things as rights any where, and that he has none himself; for who is there in the world but man? But if Mr. Burke means to admit that man has rights, the question then will be what are those rights, and how came man by them originally?

The error of those who reason by precedents drawn from antiquity, respecting the rights of man, is, that they do not go far enough into antiquity. They do not go the whole way. They stop in some of the intermediate stages of an hundred or a thousand years, and produce what was then done as a rule for the present day. This is no authority at all. If we travel still further into antiquity, we shall find a directly contrary opinion and practice prevailing; and, if antiquity is to be authority, a thousand such authorities may be produced, successively contradicting each other: but if we proceed on, we shall at last come out right: we shall come to the time when man came from the hand of his maker. What was he then? Man. Man was his high and only title, and a higher cannot be given him. But of titles I shall speak hereafter.

We have now arrived at the origin of man, and at the origin of his rights. As to the manner in which the world has been governed from that day to this, it is no further any concern of ours than to make a proper use of the errors or the improvements which the history of it presents. Those who lived an hundred or a thousand years ago, were then moderns as we are now. They had *their* ancients and those ancients had others, and we also shall be ancients in our turn. If the mere name of antiquity is to govern in the affairs of life, the people who are to live an hundred or a thousand years hence, may as well take us for a precedent, as we make a precedent of those who lived an hundred or a thousand years ago. The fact is, that portions of antiquity, by proving every thing, establish nothing. It is authority against authority all the way, till we come to the divine origin of the rights of man, at the creation. Here our inquiries find a resting-place, and our reason finds a home. If a dispute about the rights of man had arisen at the distance of an hundred years from the creation, it is to this source of authority they must have referred, and it is to the same source of authority that we must now refer

Though I mean not to touch upon any sectarian principle of religion, yet it may be worth observing, that the genealogy of Christ is traced to Adam. Why then not trace the rights of man to the creation of man? I will answer the question. Because there have been an upstart of government, thrusting themselves between, and presumptuously working to *un-make* man.

If any generation of men ever possessed the right of dictating the mode by which the world should be governed for ever, it was the first generation that existed; and if that generation did not do it, no succeeding generation can show any authority for doing it, nor set any up. The illuminating and divine principles of the equal rights of man, (for it has its origin from the maker of man,) relates, not only to the living individuals, but to generations of men succeeding each other. Every generation is equal in rights to the generations which preceded it, by the same rule that every individual is born equal in rights with his contemporary.

Every history of the creation, and every traditionary account, whether from the lettered or unlettered world, however they may vary in their opinion or belief of certain particulars, all agree in establishing one point, *the unity of man*; by which I mean that man is all of *one degree*, and consequently that all men are born equal, and with equal natural rights, in the same manner as if posterity had been continued by *creation* instead of *generation*, the latter being only the mode by which the former is carried forward; and consequently, every child born into the world must be considered as deriving its existence from God. The world is as new to him as it was to the first man that existed, and his natural right in it is of the same kind.

The Mosaic account of the creation, whether taken as divine authority, or merely historical, is fully up to this point, *the unity or equality of man*. The expressions admit of no controversy. "And God said, let us make man in our own image. In the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." The distinction of sexes is pointed out, but no other distinction is even implied. If this be not divine authority, it is at least historical authority, and shows that the equality of man, so far from being a modern doctrine, is the oldest upon record.

It is also to be observed, that all the religions known in the world are founded, so far as they relate to man, on the *unity of man*, as being all of *one degree*. Whether in heaven or in hell

or in whatever state man may be supposed to exist hereafter, the good and the bad are the only distinctions. Nay, even the laws of governments are obliged to slide into this principle, by making degrees to consist in crimes, and not in persons.

It is one of the greatest of all truths, and of the highest advantage to cultivate. By considering man in this light, and by instructing him to consider himself in this light, it places him in a close connexion with all his duties, whether to his Creator, or to the creation, of which he is a part ; and it is only when he forgets his origin, or, to use a more fashionable phrase, his *birth and family*, that he becomes dissolute. It is not among the least of the evils of the present existing governments in all parts of Europe, that man, considered as man, is thrown back to a vast distance from his maker, and the artificial chasm filled up by a succession of barriers, or a sort of turnpike gates, through which he has to pass. I will quote Mr. Burke's catalogue of barriers that he has set up between man and his Maker. Putting himself in the character of a herald, he says—"We fear God—with duty to magistrates—with reverence to priests, and with respect to nobility." Mr. Burke has forgot to put in "chivalry." He has also forgot to put in Peter.

The duty of man is not a wilderness of turnpike gates, through which he is to pass by tickets from one to the other. It is plain and simple, and consists but of two points. His duty to God, which every man must feel ; and with respect to his neighbor, to do as he would be done by. If those to whom power is delegated do well, they will be respected ; if not they will be despised ; and with regard to those to whom no power is delegated, but who assume it, the rational world can know nothing of them.

Hitherto we have spoken only (and that but in part) of the natural rights of man. We have now to consider the civil rights of man, and to show how the one originates out of the other. Man did not enter into society to become *worse* than he was before, nor to have less rights than he had before, but to have those rights better secured. His natural rights are the foundation of all his civil rights. But in order to pursue this distinction with more precision, it is necessary to mark the different qualities of natural and civil rights.

A few words will explain this. Natural rights are those which always appertain to man in right of his existence. Of this kind are all the intellectual rights, or rights of the mind, and also all those rights of acting as an individual for his own comfort and happiness, which are not injurious to the rights of others.—Civil rights are those which appertain to man in right of his being a member of society. Every civil right has for its foundation some natural right pre-existing in the individual, but to which his individual power is not, in all cases, sufficiently competent. Of this kind are all those which relate to security and protection.

From this short review, it will be easy to distinguish between that class of natural rights which man retains after entering into society, and those which he throws into common stock as a member of society.

The natural rights which he retains, are all those in which the power to execute is as perfect in the individual as the right itself. Among this class, as is before mentioned, are all the intellectual rights, or rights of the mind: consequently, religion is one of those rights. The natural rights which are not retained, are all those in which, though the right is perfect in the individual, the power to execute them is defective. They answer not his purposes. A man by natural right, has a right to judge in his own cause; and so far as the right of the mind is concerned, he never surrenders it: but what availeth it him to judge, if he has not power to redress it? He therefore deposits this right in the common stock of society, and takes the arm of society, of which he is a part, in preference and in addition to his own. Society *grants* him nothing. Every man is a proprietor in society, and draws on the capital as a matter of right.

From these premises, two or three certain conclusions will follow.

1st, that every civil right grows out of a natural right; or, in other words, is a natural right exchanged.

2d, That civil power properly considered as such, is made up of the aggregate of that class of the natural rights of man, which becomes defective in the individual in point of power, and answers not his purpose, but when collected to a focus, becomes competent to the purpose of every one.

3d. That the power produced by the aggregate of natural rights, imperfect in power in the individual, cannot be applied to invade

the natural rights which are retained in the individual, and in which the power to execute is as perfect as the right itself.

We have now, in a few words, traced man from a natural individual to a member of society, and shown, or endeavored to show, the quality of the natural rights retained, and of those which are exchanged for civil rights. Let us now apply those principles to government.

In casting our eyes over the world, it is extremely easy to distinguish the governments which have arisen out of society, or out of the social compact, from those which have not: but to place this in a clearer light than a single glance may afford, it will be proper to take a review of the several sources from which governments have arisen, and on which they have been founded.

They may be all comprehended under three heads—1st, superstition: 2d, power; 3d. the common interests of society, and the common rights of man.

The first was a government of priest-craft, the second of conquerors, and the third of reason.

When a set of artful men pretended, through the medium of oracles, to hold intercourse with the deity, as familiarly as they now march up the back stairs in European courts, the world was completely under the government of superstition. The oracles were consulted, and whatever they were made to say, became the law; and this sort of government lasted just as long as this sort of superstition lasted.

After these a race of conquerors arose, whose government, like that of William the conqueror, was founded in power, and the sword assumed the name of a sceptre. Governments thus established, last as long as the power to support them lasts; but that they might avail themselves of every engine in their favor, they united fraud to force, and set up an idol which they called *divine right*, and which, in imitation of the pope who affects to be spiritual and temporal, and in contradiction to the founder of the Christian religion, twisted itself afterwards into an idol of another shape, called *church and state*. The key of St. Peter, and the key of the treasury, became quartered on one another, and the wondering, cheated multitude, worshipped the invention.

When I contemplate the natural dignity of man ; when I feel (for nature has not been kind enough to me to blunt my feelings) for the honor and happiness of its character, I become irritated at the attempt to govern mankind by force and fraud, as if they were all knaves and fools, and can scarcely avoid feeling disgust for those who are thus imposed upon.

We have now to review the governments which arise out of society, in contradistinction to those which arose out of superstition and conquest.

It has been thought a considerable advance towards establishing the principles of freedom, to say, that government is a compact between those who govern and those who are governed : but this cannot be true, because it is putting the effect before the cause : for as man must have existed before governments existed, there necessarily was a time when governments did not exist, and consequently there could originally exist no governors to form such a compact with. The fact therefore must be, that the *individuals themselves*, each in his own personal and sovereign right, *entered into a compact with each other* to produce a government : and this is the only mode in which governments have a right to be established ; and the only principle on which they have a right to exist.

To possess ourselves of a clear idea of what government is, or ought to be, we must trace it to its origin. In doing this, we shall easily discover that governments must have arisen, either *out of* the people, or *over* the people. Mr. Burke has made no distinction. He investigates nothing to its source, and therefore he confounds every thing : but he has signified his intention of undertaking at some future opportunity, a comparison between the constitutions of England and France. As he thus renders it a subject of controversy by throwing the gauntlet, I take him up on his own ground. It is in high challenges that high truths have the right of appearing ; and I accept it with the more readiness, because it affords me, at the same time, an opportunity of pursuing the subject with respect to governments arising out of society.

But it will be first necessary to define what is meant by a *constitution*. It is not sufficient that we adopt the word ; we must fix also a standard signification to it.

A constitution is not a thing in name only, but in fact. It has not an ideal, but a real existence ; and wherever it cannot be produced in a visible form, there is none. A constitution is a thing antecedent to a government, and a government is only the creature of a constitution. The constitution of a country is not the act of its government, but of the people constituting a government. It is the body of elements, to which you can refer, and quote article by article ; and contains the principles on which the government shall be established, the form in which it shall be organized, the powers it shall have, the mode of elections, the duration of parliaments, or by whatever name such bodies may be called ; the powers which the executive part of the government shall have ; and, in fine, every thing that relates to the complete organization of a civil government, and the principle on which it shall act, and by which it shall be bound. A constitution, therefore is to a government, what the laws made afterwards by that government are to a court of judicature. The court of judicature does not make laws, neither can it alter them ; it only acts in conformity to the laws made ; and the government is in like manner governed by the constitution.

Can then Mr. Burke produce the English constitution ? If he cannot, we may fairly conclude, that though it has been so much talked about, no such thing as a constitution exists, or ever did exist, and consequently the people have yet a constitution to form.

Mr. Burke will not, I presume, deny the position I have already advanced ; namely, that governments arise either *out of* the people, or *over* the people. The English government is one of those which arose out of a conquest, and not out of society, and consequently it arose over the people ; and though it has been much modified from the opportunity of circumstances, since the time of William the conqueror, the country has never yet regenerated itself, and it is therefore without a constitution.

I readily perceive the reason why Mr. Burke declined going into the comparison between the English and the French constitutions, because he could not but perceive, when he sat down to the task, that no constitution was in existence on his side of the question. His book is certainly bulky enough to have contained all he could say on this subject, and it would have been the best

manner in which people could have judged of their separate merits. Why then has he declined the only thing that was worth while to write upon ? It was the strongest ground he could take, if the advantages were on his side ; but the weakest if they were not ; and his declining to take it, is either a sign that he could not possess it, or could not maintain it.

Mr. Burke has said in his speech last winter in parliament, that when the national assembly of France first met in three orders, (the *tiers etats*, the clergy, and the *noblesse*) that France had then a good constitution. This shows, among numerous other instances, that Mr. Burke does not understand what a constitution is. The persons so met, were not a *constitution*, but a *convention* to make a constitution.

The present national assembly of France is, strictly speaking, the personal social compact. The members of it are the delegates of the nation in its *original* character ; future assemblies will be the delegates of the nation in its *organized* character. The authority of the present assembly is different to what the authority of future assemblies will be. The authority of the present one is to form a constitution : the authority of future assemblies will be to legislate according to the principles and forms prescribed in that constitution ; and if experience should hereafter show that alterations, amendments, or additions are necessary, the constitution will point out the mode by which such things shall be done, and not leave it to the discretionary power of the future government.

A government on the principles on which constitutional governments, arising out of society, are established, cannot have the right of altering itself. If it had, it would be arbitrary. It might make itself what it pleased ; and wherever such a right is set up, it shows that there is no constitution. The act by which the English parliament empowered itself to sit for seven years, shows there is no constitution in England. It might, by the same self authority, have sat any greater number of years or for life. The bill which the present Mr. Pitt brought into parliament some years ago, to reform parliament, was on the same erroneous principle.

The right of reform is in the nation in its original character, and the constitutional method would be by a general convention elected for the purpose. There is moreover a paradox in the idea of vitiated bodies reforming themselves.

From these preliminaries I proceed to draw some comparisons. I have already spoken of the declaration of rights; and as I mean to be as concise as possible, I shall proceed to other parts of the French constitution.

The constitution of France says, that every man who pays a tax of sixty sous per annum (2s. and 6d. English) is an elector. What article will Mr. Burke place against this? Can any thing be more limited, and at the same time more capricious, than what the qualifications of electors are in England? Limited—because not one man in a hundred (I speak much within compass) is admitted to vote: capricious—because the lowest character that can be supposed to exist, and who has not so much as the visible means of an honest livelihood, is an elector in some places; while, in other places, the man who pays very large taxes, and with a fair known character, and the farmer who rents to the amount of three or four hundred pounds a year, and with a property on that farm to, three or four times that amount, is not admitted to be an elector. Every thing is out of nature, as Mr. Burke says on another occasion, in this strange chaos, and all sorts of follies are blended with all sorts of crimes. William the conqueror, and his descendants, parcelled out the country in this manner, and bribed one part of it by what they called charters, to hold the other parts of it the better subjected to their will. This is the reason why so many charters abound in Cornwall. The people were averse to the government established at the conquest, and the towns were garrisoned and bribed to enslave the country. All the old charters are the badges of this conquest, and it is from this source that the capriciousness of election arises

The French constitution says, that the number of representatives for any place shall be in a ratio to the number of taxable inhabitants or electors. What article will Mr. Burke place against this? The county of Yorkshire, which contains near a million of souls, sends two county members; and so does the county of Rutland, which contains not a hundredth part of that number. The town of old Sarum, which contains not three houses, sends two members; and the town of Manchester, which contains upwards of sixty thousand souls, is not admitted to send any. Is there any principle in these things? Is there any thing by which you can trace the marks of freedom

or discover those of wisdom? No wonder then Mr. Burke has declined the comparison, and endeavoured to lead his readers from the point, by a wild unsystematical display of paradoxical rhapsodies.

The French constitution says, that the national assembly shall be elected every two years. What article will Mr. Burke place against this? Why, that the nation has no right at all in the case: that the government is perfectly arbitrary with respect to this point; and he can quote for his authority, the precedent of a former parliament.

The French constitution says, there shall be no game laws; that the farmer on whose lands wild game shall be found (for it is by the produce of those lands they are fed) shall have a right to what he can take. That there shall be no monopolies of any kind, that all trades shall be free, and every man free to follow any occupation by which he can procure an honest livelihood, and in any place, town, or city, throughout the nation. What will Mr. Burke say to this? In England, game is made the property of those at whose expense it is not fed; and with respect to monopolies, the country is cut up into monopolies. Every chartered town is an aristocratic monopoly in itself, and the qualification of electors proceeds out of those chartered monopolies. Is this freedom? Is this what Mr. Burke means by a constitution?

In these chartered monopolies a man coming from another part of the country, is hunted from them as if he were a foreign enemy. An Englishman is not free in his own country: every one of those places presents a barrier in his way, and tells him he is not a freeman—that he has no rights. Within these monopolies, are other monopolies. In a city, such for instance as Bath, which contains between twenty and thirty thousand inhabitants, the right of electing representatives to parliament is monopolized into about thirty-one persons. And within these monopolies are still others. A man, even of the same town, whose parents were not in circumstances to give him an occupation, is debarred, in many cases, from the natural right of acquiring one, be his genius or industry what it may.

Are these things examples to hold out to a country regenerating itself from slavery, like France? Certainly they are not; and certain am I, that when the people of England come to reflect upon them, they will, like France, annihilate those badges

of ancient oppression, those traces of a conquered nation. Had Mr. Burke possessed talents similar to the author "On the Wealth of Nations," he would have comprehended all the parts which enter into, and, by assemblage, form a constitution. He would have reasoned from minutiae to magnitude. It is not from his prejudices only, but from the disorderly cast of his genius, that he is unfitted for the subject he writes upon. Even his genius is without a constitution. It is a genius at random, and not a genius constituted. But he must say something—He has therefore mounted in the air like a balloon, to draw the eyes of the multitude from the ground they stand upon.

Much is to be learned from the French constitution. Conquest and tyranny transplanted themselves with William the conqueror, from Normandy into England, and the country is yet disfigured with the marks. May then the example of all France contribute to regenerate the freedom which a province of it destroyed!

The French constitution says, that to preserve the national representation from being corrupt, no member of the national assembly shall be an officer of government, a placeman or a pensioner. What will Mr. Burke place against this? I will whisper his answer: *loaves and fishes*. Ah! this government of loaves and fishes has more mischief in it than people have yet reflected on. The national assembly has made the discovery, and holds out an example to the world. Had governments agreed to quarrel on purpose to fleece their countries by taxes, they could not have succeeded better than they have done.

Every thing in the English government appears to me the reverse of what it ought to be, and of what it is said to be. The parliament, imperfectly and capriciously elected as it is, is nevertheless *supposed* to hold the national purse in *trust* for the nation; but in the manner in which an English parliament is constructed, it is like a man being both mortgager and mortgagee: and in the case of misapplication of trust, it is the criminal sitting in judgment on himself. If those persons who vote the supplies are the same persons who receive the supplies when voted, and are to account for the expenditure of those supplies to those who voted them, it is *themselves accountable to themselves*, and the Comedy of Errors concludes with the pantomime of *Hush*.

Neither the ministerial party, nor the opposition will touch upon this case. The national purse is the common hack which each mounts upon. It is like what the country people call, "Ride and tie—You ride a little way and then I." They order these things better in France.

The French constitution says, that the right of war and peace is in the nation. Where else should it reside, but in those who are to pay the expense?

In England the right is said to reside in a *metaphor*, shown at the tower for sixpence or a shilling a-piece; so are the lions; and it would be a step nearer to reason to say it resided in them, for any inanimate metaphor is no more than a hat or a cap. We can all see the absurdity of worshipping Aaron's molten calf, or Nebuchadnezzar's golden image; but why do men continue to practise on themselves the absurdities they despise in others?

It may with reason be said, that in the manner the English nation is represented, it matters not where this right resides, whether in the crown or in the parliament. War is the common harvest of all those who participate in the division and expenditure of public money, in all countries. It is the art of *conquering at home*: the object of it is an increase of revenue; and as revenue cannot be increased without taxes, a pretence must be made for expenditures. In reviewing the history of the English government, its wars and taxes, an observer, not blinded by prejudice, nor warped by interest, would declare that taxes were not raised to carry on wars, but that wars were raised to carry on taxes.

Mr. Burke, as a member of the house of commons, is a part of the English government; and though he professes himself an enemy to war, he abuses the French constitution, which seeks to explode it. He holds up the English government as a model in all its parts, to France; but he should first know the remarks which the French make upon it. They contend, in favor of their own, that the portion of liberty enjoyed in England, is just enough to enslave a country by, more productively than by despotism; and that as the real object of a despotism is revenue, a government so formed obtains more than it could either by direct despotism or in a full state of freedom, and is, therefore, on the ground of interest, opposed to both. They account also for the

readiness which always appears in such governments for engaging in wars, by remarking on the different motives which produce them. In despotic governments, wars are the effects of pride; but in those governments in which they become the means of taxation, they acquire thereby a more permanent promptitude.

The French constitution, therefore, to provide against both those evils, has taken away from kings and ministers the power of declaring war, and placed the right where the expense must fall.

When the question on the right of war and peace was agitating in the national assembly, the people of England appeared to be much interested in the event, and highly to applaud the decision. As a principle, it applies as much to one country as to another. William the conqueror, *as a conqueror*, held this power of war and peace in himself, and his descendants have ever since claimed it as a right.

Although Mr. Burke has asserted the right of the parliament at the revolution to bind and control the nation and posterity *for ever*, he denies at the same time, that the parliament or the nation had any right to alter, what he calls, the succession of the crown, in any thing but in part, or by a sort of modification. By his taking this ground, he throws the case back to the *Norman conquest*; and by thus running a line of succession, springing from William the conqueror to the present day, he makes it necessary to inquire who and what William the conqueror was, and where he came from: and into the origin, history and nature of what are called prerogatives. Every thing must have had a beginning, and the fog of time and of antiquity should be penetrated to discover it. Let then Mr. Burke bring forward his William of Normandy, for it is to this origin that his argument goes. It also unfortunately happens in running this line of succession, that another line, parallel thereto, presents itself, which is, that if the succession runs in a line of the conquest, the nation runs in a line of being conquered, and it ought to rescue itself from this reproach.

But it will perhaps be said, that though the power of declaring war descends into the heritage of the conquest, it is held in check by the right of the parliament to withhold the supplies. It will always happen, when a thing is originally wrong, that amendments do not make it right, and often happens that they do as much mischief one way as good the other: and such is the case here,

for if the one rashly declares war as a matter of right, and the other pre-emptorily withholds the supplies as a matter of right, the remedy becomes as bad or worse than the disease. The one forces the nation to a combat, and the other ties its hands; but the more probable issue is, that the contrast will end in a collusion between the parties, and be made a screen to both.

On this question of war, three things are to be considered; 1st, the right of declaring it; 2d, the expense of supporting it; 3d, the mode of conducting it after it is declared. The French constitution places the *right* where the *expence* must fall, and this union can be only in the nation. The mode of conducting it, after it is declared, it consigns to the executive department. Where this the case in all countries, we should hear but little more of wars.

Before I proceed to consider other parts of the French constitution, and by way of relieving the fatigue of argument, I will introduce an anecdote which I had from Dr. Franklin.

While the doctor resided in France, as minister from America, during the war, he had numerous proposals made to him by projectors of every country and of every kind, who wished to go to the land that floweth with milk and honey, America, and among the rest, there was one who offered himself to be king. He introduced his proposal to the doctor by letter, which is now in the hands of M. Beaumarchais, of Paris—stating, first, that as the Americans had dismissed or sent away their king, they would want another. Secondly, that himself was a Norman. Thirdly, that he was of a more ancient family than the dukes of Normandy, and of a more honorable descent, his line having never been bastardized. Fourthly, that there was already a precedent in England, of kings coming out of Normandy; and on these grounds he rested his offer, *enjoining* that the doctor would forward it to America. But as the doctor did not do this, nor yet send him an answer, the projector wrote a second letter; in which he did not, it is true, threaten to go over and conquer America, but only, with great dignity, proposed, that if his offer was not accepted, that an acknowledgment of about 30,000*l.* might be made to him for his generosity! Now, as all arguments respecting succession must necessarily connect that succession with some beginning, Mr. Burke's arguments on this subject go

to show, that there is no English origin of kings, and that they are descendants of the Norman line in right of the conquest. It may, therefore, be of service to his doctrine to make the story known, and to inform him, that in case of that natural extinction to which all mortality is subject, kings may again be had from Normandy, on more reasonable terms than William the conqueror; and, consequently, that the good people of England, at the revolution of 1688, might have done much better, had such a generous Norman as *this* known *their* wants, and they *his*. The chivalric character which Mr. Burke so much admires, is certainly much easier to make a bargain with than a hard dealing Dutchman. But to return to the matters of the constitution—

The French constitution says, *there shall be no titles*; and of consequence, all that class of equivocal generation, which in some countries is called "*aristocracy*," and in others "*nobility*," is done away, and the *peer* is exalted into the *man*.

Titles are but nicknames, and every nickname is a title. The thing is perfectly harmless in itself, but it marks a sort of foppery in the human character which degrades it. It renders man diminutive in things which are great, and the counterfeit of woman in things which are little. It talks about its fine *riband* like a girl, and shows its *garter* like a child. A certain writer, of some antiquity, says, "When I was a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things."

It is, properly, from the elevated mind of France, that the folly of titles has been abolished. It has out-grown the baby-clothes of *count* and *duke*, and breeched itself in manhood. France has not levelled, it has exalted. It has put down the dwarf to set up the man. The insignificance of a senseless word like *duke*, *count*, or *earl*, has ceased to please. Even those who possessed them have disowned the gibberish, and, as they outgrew the rickets, have despised the rattle. The genuine mind of man, thirsting for its native home, society, contemns the gewgaws that separate him from it. Titles are like circles drawn by the magician's wand, to contract the sphere of man's felicity. He lives immured within the Bastile of a word, and surveys at a distance the envied life of man.

Is it then any wonder that titles should fall in France? Is it not a greater wonder they should be kept up any where? What are they? What is their worth, nay "what is their amount?" When we think or speak of a *judge*, or a *general*, we associate with it the ideas of office and character; we think of gravity in the one, and bravery in the other; but when we use a word merely as a title, no ideas associate with it. Through all the vocabulary of Adam, there is not such an animal as a duke or a count; neither can we connect any certain idea to the words. Whether they mean strength or weakness, wisdom or folly, a child or a man, or a rider or a horse, is all equivocal. What respect then can be paid to that which describes nothing, and which means nothing? Imagination has given figure and character to centaurs, satyrs, and down to all the fairy tribe; but titles baffle even the powers of fancy, and are a chimerical nondescript.

But this is not all—If a whole country is disposed to hold them in contempt, all their value is gone, and none will own them. It is common opinion only that makes them any thing or nothing, or worse than nothing. There is no occasion to take titles away, for they take themselves away when society concurs to ridicule them. This species of imaginary consequence has visibly declined in every part of Europe, and it hastens to its exit as the world of reason continues to rise. There was a time when the lowest class of what are called nobility, was more thought of than the highest is now, and when a man in armor riding through Christendom in search of adventures was more stared at than a modern duke. The world has seen this folly fall, and it has fallen by being laughed at, and the farce of titles will follow its fate. The patriots of France have discovered in good time, that rank and dignity in society must take a new ground. The old one has fallen through. It must now take the substantial ground of character, instead of the chimerical ground of titles; and they have brought their titles to the altar, and made of them a burnt-offering to reason.

If no mischief had annexed itself to the folly of titles, they would not have been worth a serious and formal destruction, such as the national assembly have decreed them: and this makes it necessary to inquire further into the nature and character of aristocracy.

That, then, which is called aristocracy in some countries, and nobility in others, arose out of the governments founded upon conquest. It was originally a military order, for the purpose of supporting military government ; (for such were all governments founded in conquests) and to keep up a succession of this order for the purpose for which it was established, all the younger branches of those families were disinherited, and the law of *primogenitureship* set up.

The nature and character of aristocracy shows itself to us in this law. It is a law against every law of nature, and nature herself calls for its destruction. Establish family justice and aristocracy falls. By the aristocratical law of *primogenitureship*, in a family of six children, five are exposed.—Aristocracy has never but *one* child. The rest are begotten to be devoured. They are thrown to the cannibal for prey, and the natural parent prepares the unnatural repast.

As every thing which is out of nature in man, affects, more or less, the interest of society, so does this. All the children which the aristocracy disowns (which are all, except the eldest) are, in general, cast like orphans on a parish, to be provided for by the public, but at a greater charge. Unnecessary offices and places in governments and courts are created at the expense of the public to maintain them.

With what kind of parental reflections can the father or mother contemplate their younger offspring. By nature they are children, and by marriage they are heirs ; but by aristocracy they are bastards and orphans. They are the flesh and blood of their parents in one line, and nothing akin to them in the other. To restore, therefore, parents to their children, and children to their parents—relations to each other, and man to society—and to exterminate the monster aristocracy, root and branch—the French constitution has destroyed the law of *primogenitureship*. Here then lies the monster, and Mr. Burke, if he pleases, may write its epitaph.

Hitherto we have considered aristocracy chiefly in one point of view. We have now to consider it in another. But whether we view it before or behind, or side ways, or any way else, domestically or publicly, it is still a monster.

In France, aristocracy had one feature less in its countenance than what it has in some other countries. It did not compose

a body of hereditary legislators. It was not "*a corporation of aristocracy*," for such I have heard M. de la Fayette describe an English house of peers. Let us then examine the grounds upon which the French constitution has resolved against having such a house in France.

Because, in the first place, as is already mentioned, aristocracy is kept up by family tyranny and injustice.

2nd, Because there is an unnatural unfitness in an aristocracy to be legislators for a nation. Their ideas of *distributive justice* are corrupted at the very source. They begin life trampling on all their younger brothers and sisters, and relations of every kind, and are taught and educated so to do. With what ideas of justice or honor can that man enter a house of legislation, who absorbs in his own person the inheritance of a whole family of children, or metes out some pitiful portion with the insolence of a gift?

3d, Because the idea of hereditary legislators is as inconsistent as that of hereditary judges, or hereditary juries; and as absurd as an hereditary mathematician, or an hereditary wise man; and as ridiculous as an hereditary poet-laureat.

4th, Because a body of men, holding themselves accountable to nobody, ought not to be trusted by any body.

5th, Because it is continuing the uncivilized principle of governments founded in conquest, and the base idea of man having property in man, and governing him by personal right.

6th, Because aristocracy has a tendency to degenerate the human species. By the universal economy of nature it is known, and by the instance of the Jews it is proved, that the human species has a tendency to degenerate, in any small number of persons, when separated from the general stock of society, and intermarrying constantly with each other. It defeats even its pretended end, and becomes in time the opposite of what is noble in man. Mr. Burke talks of nobility; let him show what it is. The greatest characters the world has known, have rose on the democratic floor. Aristocracy has not been able to keep a proportionate pace with democracy. The artificial *noble* shrinks into a dwarf before the *noble* of nature; and in the few instances (for there are some in all countries) in whom nature, as by a miracle, has survived in aristocracy, *those men despise it*. But it is time to proceed to a new subject.

The French constitution has reformed the condition of the clergy. It has raised the income of the lower and middle classes, and taken from the higher. None are now less than twelve hundred livres, (fifty pounds sterling) nor any higher than two or three thousand pounds. What will Mr. Burke place against this? Hear what he says.

He says, that "the people of England can see, without pain or grudging, an archbishop precede a duke; they can see a bishop of Durham, or a bishop of Winchester, in possession of 10,000*l.* a-year; and cannot see why it is in worse hands than estates to the like amount in the hands of this earl or that 'squire." And Mr. Burke offers this as an example to France.

As to the first part, whether the archbishop precedes the duke, or the duke the bishop, it is, I believe, to the people in general, somewhat like *Sternhold* and *Hopkins*, or *Hopkins* and *Sternhold*; you may put which you please first: and as I confess that I do not understand the merits of this case, I will not contend it with Mr. Burke.

But with respect to the latter, I have something to say. Mr. Burke has not put the case right. The comparison is out of order by being put between the bishop and the earl, or the 'squire. It ought to be put between the bishop and the curate, and then it will stand thus: *the people of England can see without grudging or pain, a bishop of Durham or a bishop of Winchester, in possession of ten thousand pounds a-year, and a curate on thirty or forty pounds a-year, or less.* No, sir, they certainly do not see these things without great pain and grudging. It is a case that applies itself to every man's sense of justice, and is one among many that calls aloud for a constitution.

In France, the cry of "*the church! the church!*" was repeated as often as in Mr. Burke's book, and as loudly as when the dissenters' bill was before parliament; but the generality of the French clergy were not to be deceived by this cry any longer. They knew that whatever the pretence might be, it was themselves who were one of the principal objects of it. It was the cry of the high beneficed clergy, to prevent any regulation of income taking place between those of ten thousand pounds a-year and the parish priest. They, therefore, joined their case to those of every other oppressed class of men, and by this union obtained redress.

The French constitution has abolished tithes, that source of perpetual discontent between the tithe-holder and the parishioner. When land is held on tithe, it is in the condition of an estate held between two parties ; one receiving one tenth, and the other nine tenths of the produce ; and, consequently, on principles of equity, if the estate can be improved, and made to produce by that improvement double or treble what it did before, or in any other ratio, the expense of such improvement ought to be borne in like proportion between the parties who are to share the produce. But this is not the case in tithes ; the farmer bears the whole expense, and the tithe-holder takes a tenth of the improvement, in addition to the original tenth, and by this means gets the value of two tenths instead of one. This is another case that calls for a constitution.

The French constitution hath abolished or renounced *toleration*, and *intoleration* also, and hath established *universal right of conscience*.

Toleration is not the *opposite* of intoleration, but is the *counterfeit* of it. Both are despotisms. The one assumes to itself the right of withholding liberty of conscience, and the other of granting it. The one is the pope, armed with fire and faggot, and the other is the pope selling or granting indulgences. The former is church and state, and the latter is church and traffic.

But toleration may be viewed in a much stronger light. Man worships not himself, but his maker : and the liberty of conscience which he claims, is not for the service of himself, but of his God. In this case, therefore, we must necessarily have the associated idea of two beings ; the *mortal* who renders the worship, and the *immortal being* who is worshipped. Toleration therefore, places itself not between man and man, nor between church and church, nor between one denomination of religion and another, but between God and man : between the being who worships, and the *being* who is worshipped ; and by the same act of assumed authority by which it tolerates man to pay his worship, it presumptuously and blasphemously sets up itself to tolerate the Almighty to receive it.

Were a bill brought into parliament, entitled, “ An *act* to tolerate or grant liberty to the Almighty to receive the worship of a Jew or a Turk,” or “ to prohibit the Almighty from receiving it,”

all men would startle, and call it blasphemy. There would be an uproar. The presumption of toleration in religious matters would then, present itself unmasked ; but the presumption is not the less because the name of "man" only appears to those laws, for the associated idea of the *worshipper* and the *worshipped* cannot be separated. Who, then, art thou, vain dust and ashes ! by whatever name thou art called, whether a king, a bishop, a church or a state, a parliament or any thing else, that obtrudest thine insignificance between the soul of man and his maker ? Mind thine own concerns. If he believes not as thou believest, it is a proof that thou believest not as he believeth, and there is no earthly power can determine between you.

With respect to what are called denominations of religion, if every one is left to judge of his own religion, there is no such thing as a religion that is wrong ; but if they are to judge of each other's religion, there is no such thing as a religion that is right ; and therefore all the world is right, or all the world is wrong. But with respect to religion itself, without regard to names, and as directing itself from the universal family of mankind to the divine object of all adoration, *it is man bringing to his maker the fruits of his heart*; and though these fruits may differ from each other like the fruits of the earth, the grateful tribute of every one is accepted.

A bishop of Durham, or a bishop of Winchester, or the archbishop who heads the dukes, will not refuse a tithe-sheaf of wheat, because it is not a cock of hay ; nor a cock of hay, because it is not a sheaf of wheat ; nor a pig because it is neither the one nor the other : but these same persons, under the figure of an established church, will not permit their maker to receive the varied tithes of man's devotion.

One of the continual choruses of Mr. Burke's book, is "church and state;" he does not mean some one particular church, or some one particular state, but any church and state ; and he uses the term as a general figure to hold forth the political doctrine of always uniting the church with the state in every country, and he censures the national assembly for not having done this in France. Let us bestow a few thoughts on this subject.

"All religions are, in their nature mild and benign, and united

with principles of morality. They could not have made proselytes at first, by professing any thing that was vicious, cruel, persecuting or immoral. Like every thing else, they had their beginning; and they proceeded by persuasion, exhortation, and example. How then is it that they lose their native mildness, and become morose and intolerant?

It proceeds from the connexion which Mr. Burke recommends. By engendering the church with the state, a sort of mule animal, capable only of destroying, and not of breeding up, is produced, called, *the church established by law*. It is a stranger, even from its birth to any parent mother on which it is begotten, and whom in time it kicks out and destroys.

The inquisition in Spain does not proceed from the religion originally professed, but from this mule animal, engendered between the church and the state. The burnings in Smithfield proceeded from the same heterogeneous production; and it was the regeneration of this strange animal in England afterwards, that renewed rancor and irreligion among the inhabitants, and that drove the people called Quakers and Dissenters to America. Persecution is not an original feature in *any* religion; but it is always the strongly-marked feature of all law-religions, or religions established by law. Take away the law-establishment, and every religion re-assumes its original benignity. In America, a catholic priest is a good citizen, a good character, and a good neighbor; an episcopalian minister is of the same description; and this proceeds independent of men, from there being no law-establishment in America.

If also we view this matter in a temporal sense, we shall see the ill effects it has had on the prosperity of nations. The union of church and state has impoverished Spain.—The revoking the edict of Nantz drove the silk manufacture from that country into England; and church and state are now driving the cotton manufacture from England to America and France. Let then Mr. Burke continue to preach his anti-political doctrine of church and state. It will do some good. The national assembly will not follow his advice, but will benefit by his folly. It was by observing the ill effects of it in England, that America has been warned against it; and it is by experiencing them in France, that the national assembly have abolished it, and, like America, has

established *universal right of conscience, and universal right of citizenship.**

I will here cease the comparison with respect to the principles of the French constitution, and conclude this part of the subject with a few observations on the organization of the formal parts of the French and English governments.

The executive power in each country is in the hands of a person styled the king; but the French constitution distinguishes between the king and the sovereign: it considers the station of king as official, and places sovereignty in the nation.

The representatives of the nation, which compose the national assembly, and who are the legislative power, originate in and from the people by election, as an inherent right in the people. In England it is otherwise; and this arises from the original establishment of what is called its monarchy; for as by the conquest all the rights of the people or the nation were absorbed into the hands of the conqueror, and who added the title of king to that of conqueror, those same matters which in France are

* When in any country we see extraordinary circumstances taking place, they naturally lead any man who has a talent for observation and investigation, to inquire into the causes. The manufacturers of Manchester, Birmingham, and Sheffield, are the principal manufacturers in England. From whence did this arise? A little observation will explain the case. The principal, and the generality of the inhabitants of those places, are not of what is called in England, the church established by law: and they, or their fathers (for it is within but a few years) withdrew from the persecution of the chartered towns, where test-laws more particularly operate, and established a sort of asylum for themselves in those places. It was the only asylum then offered, for the rest of Europe was worse. But the case is now changing.—France and America bid all comers welcome, and initiate them into all the rights of citizenship. Policy and interest, therefore, will, but perhaps too late, dictate in England, what reason and justice could not. Those manufacturers are withdrawing to other places. There is now erecting in Passey, three miles from Paris, a large cotton manufactory, and several are already erected in America. Soon after the rejecting the bill for repealing the test-law, one of the richest manufacturers in England said in my hearing, “England, sir, is not a country for a Dissenter to live in,—we must go to France.” These are truths, and it is doing justice to both parties to tell them. It is chiefly the Dissenters that have carried English manufactures to the height they are now at, and the same men have it in their power to carry them away; and though those manufactures would afterwards continue in those places, the foreign market will be lost. There frequently appears in the London Gazette, extracts from certain acts to prevent machines, and as far as it can extend to persons, from going out of the country. It appears from these that the ill effects of the test-laws and church-establishment begin to be much suspected; but the remedy of force can never supply the remedy of reason. In the progress of less than a century, all the unrepresented part of England, of all denominations which is at least an hundred times the most numerous, may begin to feel the necessity of a constitution, and then all those matters will come regularly before them.

now held as rights in the people, or in the nation, are held in England as grants from what is called the crown. The parliament in England, in both its branches, was erected by patents from the descendants of the conqueror. The house of commons did not originate as a matter of right in the people, to delegate or elect, but as a grant or boon.

By the French constitution, the nation is always named before the king. The third article of the declaration of rights says, "*The nation is essentially the source (or fountain) of all sovereignty.*" Mr. Burke argues, that, in England, a king is the fountain—that he is the fountain of all honor. But as this idea is evidently descended from the conquest, I shall make no other remark upon it than that it is the nature of conquest to turn every thing upside down; and as Mr. Burke will not be refused the privilege of speaking twice, and as there are but two parts in the figure, the *fountain* and the *spout*, he will be right the second time.

The French constitution puts the legislative before the executive; the law before the king; *la loi, le roi*. This also is in the natural order of things; because laws must have existence, before they can have execution.

A king in France does not, in addressing himself to the national assembly, say, "my assembly," similar to the phrase used in England of "*my parliament*;" neither can he use it consistent with the constitution, nor could it be admitted. There may be propriety in the use of it in England, because, as is before mentioned, both houses of parliament originated out of what is called the crown, by patent or boon—and not out of the inherent rights of the people, as the national assembly does in France, and whose name designates its origin.

The president of the national assembly does not ask the king to grant to the assembly the liberty of speech, as is the case with the English house of commons. The constitutional dignity of the national assembly cannot debase itself. Speech is, in the first place, one of the natural rights of man, always retained; and with respect to the national assembly, the use of it is their *duty*, and the nation is their *authority*. They were elected by the greatest body of men exercising the right of election the European world ever saw. They sprung not from the filth of rotten boroughs, nor are they vassal representatives of aristocratical

ones. Feeling the proper dignity of their character, they support it. Their parliamentary language, whether for or against a question, is free, bold, and manly, and extends to all the parts and circumstances of the case. If any matter or subject respecting the executive department, or the person who presides in it (the king,) comes before them, it is debated on with the spirit of men, and the language of gentlemen; and their answer, or their address, is returned in the same style. They stand not aloft with the gaping vacuity of vulgar ignorance, nor bend with the cringe of sycophantic insignificance. The graceful pride of truth knows no extremes, and preserves in every latitude of life the right-angled character of man.

Let us now look to the other side of the question. In the addresses of the English parliaments to their kings, we see neither the intrepid spirit of the old parliaments of France, nor the serene dignity of the present national assembly; neither do we see in them any thing of the style of English manners, which borders somewhat on bluntness. Since then they are neither of foreign extraction, nor naturally of English production, their origin must be sought for elsewhere, and that origin is the Norman conquest. They are evidently of the vassalage class of manners, and emphatically mark the prostrate distance that exists in no other condition of men than between the conqueror and the conquered. That this vassalage idea and style of speaking was not got rid of, even at the revolution of 1688, is evident from the declaration of parliament to William and Mary, in these words: "we do most humbly and faithfully *submit* ourselves, our heirs and posterity for ever." Submission is wholly a vassalage term, repugnant to the dignity of freedom, and an echo of the language used at the conquest.

As the estimation of all things is by comparison, the revolution of 1688, however from circumstances it may have been exalted above its value, will find its level. It is already on the wane, eclipsed by the enlarging orb of reason, and the revolutions of America and France. In less than another century, it will go, as well as Mr. Burke's labors, "to the family vault of all the Capulets." Mankind will then scarcely believe that a country calling itself free, would send to Holland for a man, and clothe him with power, on purpose to put themselves in fear of him, and give him almost a million sterling a-year for leave to *submit* them

selves and their posterity, like bondmen and bondwomen for ever.

But there is a truth that ought to be made known ; I have had the opportunity of seeing it : which is, *that, notwithstanding appearances, there is not any description of men that despise monarchy so much as courtiers.* But they well know, that if it were seen by others, as it is seen by them, the juggle could not be kept up. They are in the condition of men who get their living by show, and to whom the folly of that show is so familiar that they ridicule it ; but were the audience to be made as wise, in this respect, as themselves, there would be an end to the show and the profits with it. The difference between a republican and a courtier with respect to monarchy, is, that the one opposes monarchy believing it to be something, and the other laughs at it knowing it to be nothing.

As I used sometimes to correspond with Mr. Burke, believing him then to be a man of sounder principles than his book shows him to be, I wrote to him last winter from Paris, and gave him an account how prosperously matters were going on. Among other subjects in that letter, I referred to the happy situation the national assembly were placed in ; that they had taken a ground on which their moral duty and their political interest were united. They have not to hold out a language which they do not believe, for the fraudulent purpose of making others believe it. Their station requires no artifice to support it, and can only be maintained by enlightening mankind. It is not their interest to cherish ignorance, but to dispel it. They are not in the case of a ministerial or an opposition party in England, who, though they are opposed, are still united to keep up the common mystery. The national assembly must throw open a magazine of light. It must show man the proper character of man ; and the nearer it can bring him to that standard, the stronger the national assembly becomes.

In contemplating the French constitution, we see in it a rational order of things. The principles harmonize with the forms, and both with their origin. It may perhaps be said as an excuse for bad forms, that they are nothing more than forms ; but this is a mistake. Forms grow out of principles, and operate to continue the principles they grow from. It is impossible to practice a bad form on any thing but a bad principle. It cannot be ingrafted on

a good one; and wherever the forms in any government are bad it is a certain indication that the principles are bad also.

I will here finally close this subject. I began it by remarking that Mr. Burke had *voluntarily* declined going into a comparison of the English and French constitutions. He apologizes (p. 241) for not doing it, by saying that he had not time. Mr. Burke's book was upwards of eight months in hand, and it extended to a volume of three hundred and fifty-six pages. As his omission does injury to his cause, his apology makes it worse; and men on the English side of the water will begin to consider, whether there is not some radical defect in what is called the English constitution, that made it necessary in Mr. Burke to suppress the comparison, to avoid bringing it into view.

As Mr. Burke has not written on constitutions, so neither has he written on the French revolution. He gives no account of its commencement or its progress. He only expresses his wonder. "It looks," says he, "to me as if I were in a great crisis, not of the affairs of France alone, but of all Europe, perhaps of more than Europe. All circumstances taken together, the French revolution is the most astonishing that has hitherto happened in the world."

As wise men are astonished at foolish things, and other people at wise ones, I know not on which ground to account for Mr. Burke's astonishment; but certain it is that he does not understand the French revolution. It has apparently burst forth like a creation from a chaos, but it is no more than the consequence of mental revolution previously existing in France. The mind of the nation had changed beforehand, and a new order of things has naturally followed a new order of thoughts.—I will here, as concisely as I can, trace out the growth of the French revolution, and mark the circumstances that have contributed to produce it.

The despotism of Louis the XIV. united with the gaiety of his court, and the gaudy ostentation of his character, had so humbled, and at the same time so fascinated the mind of France, that the people appear to have lost all sense of their own dignity, in contemplating that of their grand monarch: and the whole reign of Louis XV. remarkable only for weakness and effeminacy, made no other alteration than that of spreading a sort of lethargy over the nation, from which it showed no disposition to rise.

The only signs which appeared of the spirit of liberty during

those periods, are to be found in the writings of the French philosophers. Montesquieu, president of the parliament of Bourdeaux, went as far as a writer under a despotic government could well proceed : and being obliged to divide himself between principle and prudence, his mind often appears under a veil, and we ought to give him credit for more than he has expressed.

Voltaire, who was both the flatterer and satirist of despotism, took another line. His forte lay in exposing and ridiculing the superstitions which priest-craft, united with state-craft, had interwoven with governments. It was not from the purity of his principles, or his love of mankind, (for satire and philanthropy are not naturally concordant,) but from his strong capacity of seeing folly in its true shape, and his irresistible propensity to expose it, that he made those attacks. They were however as formidable as if the motives had been virtuous ; and he merits the thanks rather than the esteem of mankind.

On the contrary, we find in the writings of Rousseau and abbe Raynal, a loveliness of sentiment in favor of liberty, that excites respect, and elevates the human faculties ; yet having raised this animation, they do not direct its operations, but leave the mind in love with an object, without describing the means of possessing it.

The writings of Quisne, Turgot, and the friends of those authors, are of a serious kind ; but they labored under the same disadvantage with Montesquieu ; their writings abound with moral maxims of government, but are rather directed to economise and reform the administration of the government, than the government itself.

But all those writings and many others had their weight ; and by the different manner in which they treated the subject of government, Montesquieu by his judgment and knowledge of laws : Voltaire by his wit ; Rousseau and Raynal by their animation, and Quisne and Turgot by their moral maxims and systems of economy, readers of every class met with something to their taste, and a spirit of political inquiry began to diffuse itself through the nation at the time the dispute between England and the then colonies of America broke out.

In the war which France afterwards engaged in, it is very well known that the nation appeared to be beforehand with the French ministry. Each of them had its views ; but those views were directed to different objects ; the one sought liberty and the other

retaliation on England. The French officers and soldiers who after this went to America, were eventually placed in the school of freedom, and learned the practice as well as the principles of it by heart.

As it was impossible to separate the military events which took place in America from the principles of the American revolution, the publication of those events in France necessarily connected themselves with the principles that produced them. Many of the facts were in themselves principles ; such as the declaration of American Independence, and the treaty of alliance between France and America, which recognized the natural rights of man, and justified resistance to oppression.

The then minister of France, count Vergennes, was not the friend of America ; and it is both justice and gratitude to say, that it was the queen of France who gave the cause of America a fashion at the French court. Count Vergennes was the personal and social friend of Dr. Franklin ; and the doctor had obtained by his sensible gracefulness, a sort of influence over him ; but with respect to principles, count Vergennes was a despot.

The situation of Dr. Franklin as minister from America to France should be taken into the chain of circumstances. A diplomatic character is the narrowest sphere of society that man can act in. It forbids intercourse by a reciprocity of suspicion ; and a diplomatist is a sort of unconnected atom, continually repelling and repelled. But this was not the case with Dr. Franklin ; he was not the diplomatist of a court, but of *man*. His character as a philosopher had been long established, and his circle of society in France was universal.

Count Vergennes resisted for a considerable time the publication of the American constitutions in France, translated into the French language ; but even in this he was obliged to give way to public opinion, and a sort of propriety in admitting to appear what he had undertaken to defend. The American constitutions were to liberty, what a grammar is to language : they define its parts of speech, and practically construct them into syntax.

The peculiar situation of the then marquis de la Fayette is another link in the great chain. He served in America as an American officer, under a commission of congress, and by the universality of his acquaintance, was in close friendship with the civil government of America as well as with the military line.

He spoke the language of the country, entered into the discussions on the principles of government, and was always a welcome friend at any election.

When the war closed, a vast reinforcement to the cause of liberty spread itself over France, by the return of the French officers and soldiers. A knowledge of the practice was then joined to the theory; and all that was wanting to give it real existence, was opportunity. Man, cannot, properly speaking, make circumstances for his purpose, but he always has it in his power to improve them when they occur: and this was the case in France.

M. Neckar was displaced in May 1781; and by the ill management of the finances afterwards, and particularly during the extravagant administration of M. Calonne, the revenue of France which was nearly twenty-four millions sterling per year, was become unequal to the expenditures, not because the revenue had decreased, but because the expenses had increased, and this was the circumstance which the nation laid hold of to bring forward a revolution. The English minister, Mr. Pitt, has frequently alluded to the state of the French finances in his budgets, without understanding the subject. Had the French parliaments been as ready to register edicts for new taxes, as an English parliament is to grant them, there had been no derangement in the finances, nor yet any revolution; but this will better explain itself as I proceed.

It will be necessary here to show how taxes were formerly raised in France. The king, or rather the court or ministry, acting under the use of that name, framed the edicts for taxes at their own discretion, and sent them to the parliaments to be registered; for until they were registered by the parliaments, they were not operative. Disputes had long existed between the court and the parliament with respect to the extent of the parliament's authority on this head. The court insisted that the authority of parliament went no farther than to remonstrate or show reasons against the tax, reserving to itself the right of determining whether the reasons were well or ill-founded; and in consequence thereof, either to withdraw the edict as a matter of choice, or to order it to be registered as a matter of authority. The parliaments on their part insisted, that they had not only a right to

remonstrate, but to reject ; and on this ground they were always supported by the nation.

But to return to the order of my narrative—M. Calonne wanted money ; and as he knew the sturdy disposition of the parliaments with respect to new taxes, he ingeniously sought either to approach them by a more gentle means than that of direct authority, or to get over their heads by a manœuvre : and, for this purpose, he revived the project of assembling a body of men from the several provinces, under the style of an “ assembly of the notables,” or men of note, who met in 1787, and were either to recommend taxes to the parliaments, or to act as a parliament themselves. An assembly under this name had been called in 1687.

As we are to view this as the first practical step towards the revolution, it will be proper to enter into some particulars respecting it. The assembly of the notables has in some places been mistaken for the states-general, but was wholly a different body ; the states-general being always by election. The persons who composed the assembly of the notables were all nominated by the king, and consisted of one hundred and forty members. But as M. Calonne could not depend upon a majority of this assembly in his favor, he very ingeniously arranged them in such a manner as to make forty-four a majority of one hundred and forty : to effect this, he disposed of them into seven separate committees. of twenty members each. Every general question was to be decided, not by a majority of persons, but by a majority of committees ; and, as eleven votes would make a majority in a committee, and four committees a majority of seven, M. Calonne had good reason to conclude, that as forty-four would determine any general question, he could not be out-voted. But all his plans deceived him, and in the event became his overthrow.

The then marquis de la Fayette was placed in the second committee, of which count d'Artois was president ; and as money matters was the object, it naturally brought into view every circumstance connected with it. M. de la Fayette made a verbal charge against Calonne, for selling crown land to the amount of two millions of livres, in a manner that appeared to be unknown to the king. The count d'Artois (as if to intimidate, for the Bastile was then in being) asked the marquis, if he would render the charge in writing ? He replied that he would. The count d'Artois did not demand it, but brought a message from the king

to that purport. M. de la Fayette then delivered in his charge in writing, to be given to the king, undertaking to support it. No further proceedings were had upon this affair ; but M. Calonne was soon after dismissed by the king, and went to England.

As M. de la Fayette, from the experience he had had in America, was better acquainted with the science of civil government than the generality of the members who composed the assembly of the notables could then be, the brunt of the business fell considerably to his share. The plan of those who had a constitution in view, was to contend with the court on the ground of taxes, and some of them openly professed their object. Disputes frequently arose between count d'Artois and M. de la Fayette upon various subjects. With respect to the arrears already incurred, the latter proposed to remedy them, by accommodating the expenses to the revenue, instead of the revenue to the expenses ; and as objects of reform, he proposed to abolish the Bastile, and all the state prisons throughout the nation (the keeping of which was attended with great expense) and to suppress *lettres de cachet* ; but those matters were not then much attended to ; and with respect to *lettres de cachet*, a majority of the nobles appeared to be in favor of them.

On the subject of supplying the treasury by new taxes, the assembly declined taking the matter on themselves, concurring in the opinion that they had not authority. In a debate on the subject, M. de la Fayette said, that raising money by taxes could only be done by a national assembly, freely elected by the people and acting as their representatives. Do you mean said the count d'Artois, the states-general ? M. de la Fayette replied, that he did. Will you, said the count d'Artois, sign what you say, to be given to the king ? The other replied, that he not only would do this, but that he would go further, and say, that the effectual mode would be, for the king to agree to the establishment of a constitution.

As one of the plans had thus failed, that of getting the assembly to act as a parliament, the other came into view, that of recommending. On this subject, the assembly agreed to recommend two new taxes to be enregistered by the parliament, the one a stamp-act, and the other a territorial tax, or sort of land tax. The two have been estimated at about five millions ster-

ling per annum. We have now to turn our attention to the parliaments, on whom the business was again devolving.

The archbishop of Thoulouse (since archbishop of Sens, and now a cardinal) was appointed to the administration of the finances, soon after the dismissal of Calonne. He was also made prime minister, an office that did not always exist in France. When this office did not exist, the chief of each of the principal departments transacted business immediately with the king; but when a prime minister was appointed, they did business only with him. The archbishop arrived to more state-authority than any minister since the duke de Choiseul, and the nation was strongly disposed in his favor; but by a line of conduct scarcely to be accounted for, he perverted every opportunity, turned out a despot, and sunk into disgrace, and a cardinal.

The assembly of the notables having broke up, the new minister sent the edicts for the two new taxes recommended by the assembly to the parliaments, to be enregistered. They of course came first before the parliament of Paris, who returned for answer; *That with such a revenue as the nation then supported, the name of taxes ought not to be mentioned, but for the purpose of reducing them*; and threw both the edicts out.*

On this refusal, the parliament was ordered to Versailles, where in the usual form, the king held, what under the old government was called a bed of justice: and the two edicts were enregistered in presence of the parliament, by an order of state, in the manner mentioned, p. 99. On this, the parliament immediately returned to Paris, renewed their session in form, and ordered the enregistering to be struck out, declaring that every thing done at Versailles was illegal. All the members of parliament were then served with *lettres de cachet*, and exiled to Trois; but as they continued as inflexible in exile as before, and as vengeance did not supply the place of taxes, they were after a short time recalled to Paris.

The edicts were again tendered to them, and the count d'Artois undertook to act as representative for the king.—For this purpose, he came from Versailles to Paris, in a train of procession; and the parliament was assembled to receive him. But

* When the English minister, Mr. Pitt, mentions the French finances again in the English parliament, it would be well that he noticed this as an example.

show and parade had lost their influence in France ; and whatever ideas of importance he might set off with, he had to return with those of mortification and disappointment. On alighting from his carriage to ascend the steps of the parliament house, the croud (which was numerous) collected) threw out trite expressions saying, " This is monsieur d'Artois, who wants more of our money to spend." The marked disapprobation which he saw, impressed him with apprehensions ; and the word *aux arms*, (*to arms*,) was given out by the officer of the guard who attended him. It was so loudly vociferated, that it echoed through the avenues of the house, and produced a temporary confusion : I was then standing in one of the apartments through which he had to pass, and could not avoid reflecting how wretched is the condition of a dis-respected man.

He endeavoured to impress the parliament by great words, and opened his authority by saying, " The king, our lord and master." The parliament received him very coolly, and with their usual determination not to register the taxes ; and in this manner the interview ended.

After this a new subject took place : in the various debates and contests that arose between the court and the parliaments on the subject of taxes, the parliament of Paris at last declared, that although it had been customary for parliaments to enregister edicts for taxes as a matter of convenience, the right belonged only to the states-general ; and that, therefore, the parliaments could no longer with propriety continue to debate on what it had not authority to act. The king, after this, came to Paris, and held a meeting with the parliament, in which he continued from ten in the morning till about six in the evening ; and, in a manner that appeared to proceed from him, as if unconsulted upon with the cabinet or the ministry, gave his word to the parliament, that the states-general should be convened.

But, after this, another scene arose, on a ground different from all the former. The minister and the cabinet were averse to calling the states-general : they well knew, that if the states-general were assembled, that themselves must fall ; and as the king had not mentioned *any time*, they hit on a project calculated to elude, without appearing to oppose.

For this purpose, the court set about making a sort of constitution itself : it was principally the work of M. Lamoignon,

keeper of the seals, who afterwards shot himself. The arrangement consisted in establishing a body under the name of a *cour plenièrè*, or full court, in which were invested all the power that the government might have occasion to make use of. The persons composing this court to be nominated by the king; the contended right of taxation was given up on the part of the king, and a new criminal code of laws, and law proceedings, was substituted in the room of the former. The thing, in many points, contained better principles than those upon which the government had hitherto been administered: but, with respect to the *cour plenièrè*, it was no other than a medium through which despotism was to pass, without appearing to act directly from itself.

The cabinet had high expectations from their new contrivance. The persons who were to compose the *cour plenièrè*, were already nominated; and as it was necessary to carry a fair appearance, many of the best characters in the nation were appointed among the number. It was to commence on the 8th of May, 1788: but an opposition arose to it, on two grounds—the one as to principle, the other as to form.

On the ground of principle it was contended, that government had not a right to alter itself; and that if the practice was once admitted it would grow into a principle, and be made a precedent for any future alterations the government might wish to establish; that the right of altering the government was a national right, and not a right of government. And on the ground of form, it was contended that the *cour plenièrè* was nothing more than a large cabinet.

The then dukes de la Rochefoucault, Luxembourg, de Noailles, and many others, refused to accept the nomination, and strenuously opposed the whole plan. When the edict for establishing this new court was sent to the parliaments to be enregistered, and put into execution, they resisted also. The parliament of Paris not only refused, but denied the authority; and the contest renewed itself between the parliament and the cabinet more strongly than ever. While the parliament was sitting in debate on this subject, the ministry ordered a regiment of soldiers to surround the house, and form a blockade. The members sent out for beds and provision, and lived as in a besieged citadel; and as this had no effect, the commanding officer was ordered to enter the parliament house and seize them, which he did, and some

of the principal members were shut up in different prisons. About the same time a deputation of persons arrived from the province of Brittany, to remonstrate against the establishment of the *cour plenièr*e; and those the archbishop sent to the Bastile. But the spirit of the nation was not to be overcome; and it was so fully sensible of the strong ground it had taken, that of withholding taxes, that it contented itself with keeping up a sort of quiet resistance, which effectually overthrew all the plans at that time formed against it. The project of the *cour plenièr*e was at last obliged to be given up, and the prime minister not long afterwards followed its fate; and M. Neckar was recalled into office.

The attempt to establish the *cour plenièr*e had an effect upon the nation which was not anticipated. It was a sort of new form of government, that insensibly served to put the old one out of sight, and to unhinge it from the superstitious authority of antiquity. It was government dethroning government; and the old one, by attempting to make a new one, made a chasm.

The failure of this scheme renewed the subject of convening the states-general: and this gave rise to a new series of politics. There was no settled form for convening the states-general; all that it positively meant, was a deputation from what was then called the clergy, the nobility, and the commons; but their numbers, or their proportions, had not been always the same. They had been convened only on extraordinary occasions, the last of which was in 1614; their numbers were then in equal proportions, and they voted by orders.

It could not well escape the sagacity of M. Neckar, that the mode of 1614 would answer neither the purpose of the then government, nor of the nation. As matters were at that time circumstanced, it would have been too contentious to argue upon any thing. The debates would have been endless upon privileges and exemptions, in which neither the wants of the government, nor the wishes of the nation for a constitution, would have been attended to. But as he did not choose to take the decision upon himself, he summoned again the assembly of the *notables*, and referred it to them. This body was in general interested in the decision, being chiefly of the aristocracy and the high paid clergy; and they decided in favor of the mode of 1614. This decision was against the sense of the nation, and also against the wishes of the court; for the aristocracy opposed itself to both,

and contended for privileges independent of either. The subject was then taken up by the parliament, who recommended that the number of the commons should be equal to the other two ; and that they should all sit in one house, and vote in one body. The number finally determined on was twelve hundred : six hundred to be chosen by the commons (and this was less than their proportion ought to have been when their worth and consequence is considered on a national scale) three hundred by the clergy, and three hundred by the aristocracy ; but with respect to the mode of assembling themselves, whether together or apart, or the manner in which they should vote, those matters were referred.*

The election that followed, was not a contested election, but an animated one. The candidates were not men, but principles. Societies were formed in Paris, and committees of correspondence and communication established throughout the nation, for the purpose of enlightening the people, and explaining to them the principles of civil government ; and so orderly was the election conducted, that it did not give rise even to the rumour of tumult.

The states-general were to meet at Versailles in April, 1789, but did not assemble till May. They located themselves in three separate chambers, or rather the clergy and the aristocracy withdrew each into a separate chamber. The majority of the aristocracy claimed what they call the privilege of voting as a sepa-

* Mr. Burke, (and I must take the liberty of telling him that he is unacquainted with French affairs,) speaking upon this subject, says, "The first thing that struck me in calling the states-general, was a great departure from the ancient course;" and he soon after says, "From the moment I read the list, I saw distinctly, and very nearly as it has happened, all that was to follow." Mr. Burke certainly did not see all that was to follow. I have endeavored to impress him, as well before as after the states-general met, that there would be a *revolution* ; but was not able to make him see it, neither would he believe it. How then he could distinctly see all the parts, when the whole was out of sight, is beyond my comprehension. And with respect to the "departure from the ancient course," besides the natural weakness of the remark, it shows that he is unacquainted with circumstances. The departure was necessary, from the experience had upon it, that the ancient course was a bad one. The states-general of 1614 were called at the commencement of the civil war in the minority of Louis XIII. ; but by the clash of arranging them by orders, they increased the confusion they were called to compose. The author of *l'Intrigue du Cabinet*, (Intrigue of the Cabinet,) who wrote before any revolution was thought of in France, speaking of the states-general of 1614, says, "They held the public in suspense five months ; and by the questions agitated therein, and the heat with which they were put, it appears that the great (*les grands*) thought more to satisfy their particular passions, than to procure the good of the nation ; and the whole time passed away in altercations, ceremonies and parade." *l'Intrigue du Cabinet*, vol. I. p. 329.

rate body, and of giving their consent or their negative in that manner ; and many of the bishops and high-beneficed clergy claimed the same privilege on the part of their order.

The *tiers etat* (as they were called) disowned all knowledge of artificial orders and privileges ; and they were not only resolute on this point but somewhat disdainful. They began to consider aristocracy as a kind of fungus growing out of the corruption of society, that could not be admitted even as a branch of it ; and from the disposition the aristocracy had shown, by upholding *lettres de cachet*, and in sundry other instances, it was manifest that no constitution could be formed by admitting men in any other character than as national men.

After various altercations on this head, the *tiers etat*, or commons, (as they were then called) declared themselves (on a motion made for that purpose by the abbe Sieyes,) “ THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NATION ; and that the two orders could be considered but as deputies of corporations, and could only have a deliberative voice but when they assembled in a national character, with the national representatives.” This proceeding extinguished the style of *etats generaux* or states-general, and erected it into the style it now bears, that of *l'assemble nationale* or national assembly.

This motion was not made in a precipitate manner : it was the result of cool deliberation, and concerted between the national representatives and the patriotic members of the two chambers, who saw into the folly, mischief, and injustice of artificial privileged distinctions. It was become evident, that no constitution, worthy of being called by that name, could be established on any thing less than a national ground. The aristocracy had hitherto opposed the despotism of the court, and affected the language of patriotism ; but it opposed it as its rival ; (as the English barons opposed king John,) and it now opposed the nation from the same motives.

On carrying this motion, the national representatives, as had been concerted, sent an invitation to the two chambers, to unite with them in a national character, and proceed to business. A majority of the clergy, chiefly of the parish priests, withdrew from the clerical chamber, and joined the nation ; and forty-five from the other chamber joined in like manner. There is a sort of secret history belonging to this last circumstance, which is

necessary to its explanation : it was not judged prudent that all the patriotic members of the chamber, styling itself the nobles, should quit it at once : and in consequence of this arrangement, they drew off by degrees, always leaving some, as well to reason the case, as to watch the suspected. In a little time, the numbers increased from forty-five to eighty, and soon after to a greater number ; which with a majority of the clergy, and the whole of the national representatives, put the malcontents in a very diminutive condition.

The king, who, very different to the general class called by that name, is a man of a good heart, showed himself disposed to recommend a union of the three chambers, on the ground the national assembly had taken ; but the malcontents exerted themselves to prevent it, and began now to have another project in view. Their numbers consisted of a majority of the aristocratical chamber, and a minority of the clerical chamber, chiefly of bishops and high beneficed clergy ; and these men were determined to put every thing at issue, as well by strength as by stratagem. They had no objection to a constitution ; but it must be such an one as themselves should dictate, and suited to their own views and particular situations. On the other hand, the nation disowned knowing any thing of them but as citizens, and was determined to shut out all such upstart pretensions. The more aristocracy appeared, the more it was despised ; there was a visible imbecility and want of intellects in the majority, a sort of *je ne sais quoi*, that while it affected to be more than citizen, was less than man. It lost ground more from contempt than from hatred ; and was rather jeered at as an ass, than dreaded as a lion. This is the general character of aristocracy, or what are called nobles or nobility, or rather no-ability, in all countries.

The plan of the malcontents consisted now of two things ; either to deliberate and vote by chambers (or orders,) more especially on all questions respecting a constitution (by which the aristocratical chamber would have had a negative on any article of the constitution) or, in case they could not accomplish this object, to overthrow the national assembly entirely.

To effect one or the other of these objects, they began now to cultivate a friendship with the despotism they had hitherto attempted to rival, and the count d'Artois became their chief. The king (who has since declared himself deceived into their measures)

held, according to the old form, *a bed of justice*, in which he accorded to the deliberation and vote *par tete* (by head) upon several objects; but reserved the deliberation and vote upon all questions respecting a constitution to the three chambers separately. This declaration of the king was made against the advice of M. Neckar, who now began to perceive that he was growing out of fashion at court, and that another minister was in contemplation.

As the form of sitting in separate chambers was yet apparently kept up, though essentially destroyed, the national representatives, immediately after this declaration of the king, resorted to their chambers, to consult on a protest against it; and the minority of the chamber (calling itself the nobles) who had joined the national cause, retired to a private house, to consult in like manner. The malcontents had by this time concerted their measures with the court, which count d'Artois undertook to conduct; and as they saw, from the discontent which the declaration excited, and the opposition making against it, that they could not obtain a control over the intended constitution by a separate vote, they prepared themselves for their final object—that of conspiring against the national assembly, and overthrowing it.

The next morning, the door of the chamber of the national assembly was shut against them, and guarded by troops; and the members were refused admittance. On this they withdrew to a tennis-ground in the neighbourhood of Versailles, as the most convenient place they could find, and, after renewing their session, took an oath never to separate from each other, under any circumstances whatever, death excepted, until they had established a constitution. As the experiment of shutting up the house had no other effect than that of producing a closer connexion in the members, it was opened again the next day, and the public business re-commenced in the usual place.

We now are to have in view the forming the new ministry, which was to accomplish the overthrow of the national assembly. But as force would be necessary, orders were issued to assemble thirty thousand troops, the command of which was given to Broglio, one of the new-intended ministry, who was recalled from the country for this purpose. But as some management was necessary to keep this plan concealed till the moment it should be ready for execution, it is to this policy that a declaration made by

the count d'Artois must be attributed, and which is here proper to be introduced.

It could not but occur, that while the malcontents continued to resort to their chambers separate from the national assembly, that more jealousy would be excited than if they were mixed with it, and that the plot might be suspected. But as they had taken their ground, and now wanted a pretence for quitting it, it was necessary that one should be devised. This was effectually accomplished by a declaration made by count d'Artois, that "*if they took not a part in the national assembly, the life of the king would be endangered,*" on which they quitted their chambers, and mixed with the assembly in one body.

At the time this declaration was made, it was generally treated as a piece of absurdity in the count d'Artois, and calculated merely to relieve the outstanding members of the two chambers from the diminutive situation they were put in; and if nothing more had followed, this conclusion would have been good. But as things best explain themselves by events, this apparent union was only a cover to the machinations that were secretly going on, and the declaration accommodated itself to answer that purpose. In a little time the national assembly found itself surrounded by troops, and thousands daily arriving. On this a very strong declaration was made by the national assembly to the king, remonstrating on the impropriety of the measure, and demanding the reason. The king, who was not in the secret of this business, as himself afterwards declared, gave substantially for answer, that he had no other object in view than to preserve public tranquillity, which appeared to be much disturbed.

But in a few days from this time, the plot unravelled itself. M. Neckar and the ministry were displaced, and a new one formed of the enemies of the revolution; and Broglio, with between twenty-five and thirty thousand foreign troops, was arrived to support them. The mask was now thrown off, and matters were come to a crisis. The event was, that in the space of three days, the new ministry and all their abettors found it prudent to fly the nation; the Bastille was taken, and Broglio and his foreign troops dispersed; as is already related in a former part of this work.

There are some curious circumstances in the history of this short-lived ministry, and this brief attempt at a counter-revolution.

The palace of Versailles, where the court was sitting, was not more than four hundred yards distant from the hall where the national assembly was sitting. The two places were at this moment like the separate head-quarters of two combatant enemies ; yet the court was as perfectly ignorant of the information which had arrived from Paris to the national assembly, as if it had resided at a hundred miles distance. The then marquis de la Fayette, who (as has been already mentioned) was chosen to preside in the national assembly on this particular occasion, named, by order of the assembly, three successive deputations to the king, on the day, and up to the evening on which the Bastile was taken, to inform and confer with him on the state of affairs ; but the ministry, who knew not so much as that it was attacked, precluded all communication, and were solacing themselves how dexterously they had succeeded : but in a few hours the accounts arrived so thick and fast, that they had to start from their desks and run : some set off in one disguise, and some in another, and none in their own character. Their anxiety now was to outride the news, lest they should be stopped, which, though it flew fast, flew not so fast as themselves.

It is worth remarking, that the national assembly neither pursued those fugitive conspirators, nor took any notice of them, nor sought to retaliate in any shape whatever. Occupied with establishing a constitution, founded on the rights of man and the authority of the people, the only authority on which government has a right to exist in any country, the national assembly felt none of those mean passions which mark the character of impertinent governments, founding themselves on their own authority, or on the absurdity of hereditary succession. It is the faculty of the human mind to become what it contemplates, and to act in unison with its object.

The conspiracy being thus dispersed, one of the first works of the national assembly, instead of vindictive proclamations, as has been the case with other governments, published a declaration of the rights of man, as the basis on which the new constitution was to be built, and which is here subjoined.

Declaration of the rights of man and of citizens : by the national assembly of France.

“ The representatives of the people of France, formed into a national assembly, considering that ignorance, neglect, or contempt of human rights, are the sole causes of public misfortunes, and corruptions of government, have resolved to set forth, in a solemn declaration, these natural, imprescriptible, and unalienable rights : that this declaration being constantly present to the minds of the body social, they may be ever kept attentive to their rights and their duties : that the acts of the legislative and executive powers of government, being capable of being every moment compared with the end of political institutions, may be more respected : and also, that the future claims of the citizens, being directed by simple and incontestible principles, may always tend to the maintenance of the constitution and the general happiness.

“ For these reasons the national assembly doth recognize and declare, in the presence of the Supreme Being, and with the hope of his blessing and favor, the following *sacred* rights of men and of citizens :

“ I. Men are born and always continue free and equal in respect of their rights. Civil distinctions, therefore, can only be founded on public utility.

“ II. The end of all political associations is the preservation of the natural and imprescriptible rights of man ; and these rights are liberty, property, security, and resistance of oppression.

“ III. The nation is essentially the source of all sovereignty : nor can any *individual* or *any body of men*, be entitled to any authority which is not expressly derived from it.

“ IV. Political liberty consists in the power of doing whatever does not injure another. The exercise of the natural rights of every man has no other limits than those which are necessary to secure to every *other* man the free exercise of the same rights ; and these limits are determinable only by law.

“ V. The law ought to prohibit only actions hurtful to society. What is not prohibited by the law, should not be hindered ; nor should any one be compelled to that which the law does not require.

“ VI. The law is an expression of the will of the community. All citizens have a right to concur, either personally, or by their

representatives, in its formation. It should be the same to all, whether it protects or punishes; and all being equal in its sight; are equally eligible to all honors, places, and employments, according to their different abilities, without any other distinction than that created by their virtues and talents.

“VII. No man should be accused, arrested, or held in confinement, except in cases determined by the law, and according to the forms which it has prescribed. All who promote, solicit, execute, or cause to be executed, arbitrary orders, ought to be punished; and every citizen called upon or apprehended by virtue of the law, ought immediately to obey, and not render himself culpable by resistance.

“VIII. The law ought to impose no other penalties than such as are absolutely and evidently necessary; and no one ought to be punished, but in virtue of a law promulgated before the offence and legally applied.

“IX. Every man being presumed innocent till he has been convicted, whenever his detention becomes indispensable, all rigor to him, more than is necessary to secure his person, ought to be provided against by the law.

“X. No man ought to be molested on account of his opinions, not even on account of his religious opinions, provided his avowal of them does not disturb the public order established by the law.

“XI. The unrestrained communication of thoughts and opinions being one of the most precious rights of man, every citizen may speak, write, and publish freely, provided he is responsible for the abuse of this liberty in cases determined by the law.

“XII. A public force being necessary to give security to the rights of men and of citizens, that force is instituted for the benefit of the community, and not for the particular benefit of the persons with whom it is intrusted.

“XIII. A common contribution being necessary for the support of the public force, and for defraying the other expenses of government, it ought to be divided equally among the members of the community, according to their abilities.

“XIV. Every citizen has a right, either by himself or his representative, to a free voice in determining the necessity of public contributions, the appropriation of them, and their amount, mode of assessment, and duration.

“ XV. Every community has a right to demand of all its agents an account of their conduct.

“ XVI. Every community in which a separation of powers and a security of rights is not provided for, wants a constitution.

“ XVII. The right to property being inviolable and sacred, no one ought to be deprived of it, except in cases of evident public necessity legally ascertained, and on condition of a previous just indemnity.

Observations on the declaration of rights.

The three first articles comprehend in general terms the whole of a declaration of rights ; all the succeeding articles either originate out of them, or follow as elucidations. The 4th, 5th, and 6th, define more particularly what is only generally expressed in the 1st, 2d, and 3d.

The 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, and 11th, articles are declaratory of *principles* upon which laws shall be construed conformable to *rights* already declared. But it is questioned by some very good people in France, as well as in other countries, whether the 10th article sufficiently guarantees the right it is intended to accord with ; besides which, it takes off from the divine dignity of religion, and weakens its operative force upon the mind to make it a subject of human laws. It then presents itself to man, like light intercepted by a cloudy medium, in which the source of it is obscured from his sight, and he sees nothing to reverence in the dusky rays.*

The remaining articles, beginning with the twelfth, are substantially contained in the principles of the preceding articles : but, in

* There is a single idea, which, if it strikes rightly upon the mind, either in a legal or a religious sense, will prevent any man or any body of men, or any government, from going wrong on the subject of religion ; which is, that before any human institutions of government were known in the world, there existed, if I may so express it, a compact between God and man, from the beginning of time : and that as the relation and condition which man in his individual person stands in towards his Maker cannot be changed, by any human laws or human authority, that religious devotion, which is a part of this compact, cannot so much as be made a subject of human laws ; and that all laws must conform themselves to this prior existing compact, and not assume to make the compact conform to the laws, which, besides being human, are subsequent thereto. The first act of man, when he looked around and saw himself a creature which he did not make, and a world furnished for his reception, must have been devotion ; and devotion must ever continue sacred to every individual man, as it appears right to him ; and governments do mischief by interfering.

the particular situation in which France then was, having to undo what was wrong, as well as to set up what was right, it was proper to be more particular than in another condition of things would be necessary.

While the declaration of rights was before the national assembly, some of its members remarked, that if a declaration of rights was published, it should be accompanied by a declaration of duties. The observation discovered a mind that reflected, and it only erred by not reflecting far enough. A declaration of rights is, by reciprocity, a declaration of duties also. Whatever is my right as a man, is also the right of another ; and it becomes my duty to guarantee, as well as to possess.

The three first articles are the basis of liberty, as well individual as national ; nor can any country be called free, whose government does not take its beginning from the principles they contain, and continue to preserve them pure : and the whole of the declaration of rights is of more value to the world, and will do more good, than all the laws and statutes that have yet been promulgated.

In the declaratory exordium which prefaces the declaration of rights, we see the solemn and majestic spectacle of a nation opening its commission, under the auspices of its Creator, to establish a government ; a scene so new, and so transcendantly unequalled by any thing in the European world, that the name of a revolution is inexpressive of its character, and it rises into a regeneration of man. What are the present governments of Europe, but a scene of iniquity and oppression ? What is that of England ? Does not its own inhabitants say, it is a market where every man has his price, and where corruption is common traffic, at the expense of a deluded people ? No wonder, then, that the French revolution is traduced. Had it confined itself merely to the destruction of flagrant despotism, perhaps Mr. Burke and some others had been silent. Their cry now is, " It has gone too far : " that is gone too far for them. It stares corruption in the face, and the venal tribe are all alarmed. Their fear discovers itself in their outrage, and they are but publishing the groans of a wounded vice. But from such opposition, the French revolution, instead of suffering, receives homage. The more it is struck, the more sparks it will emit ; and the fear is, it will not be struck enough. It has nothing to dread from attacks. Truth

has given it an establishment ; and time will record it with a name as lasting as its own.

Having now traced the progress of the French revolution through most of its principal stages, from its commencement to the taking of the Bastile, and its establishment by the declaration of rights, I will close the subject with the energetic apostrophe of M. de la Fayette—*May this great monument raised to liberty, serve as a lesson to the oppressor, and an example to the oppressed!**



MISCELLANEOUS CHAPTER.

To prevent interrupting the argument in the preceding part of this work, or the narrative that follows it, I reserved some observations to be thrown together into a miscellaneous chapter ; by which variety might not be censured for confusion. Mr. Burke's book is *all* miscellany. His intention was to make an attack on the French revolution : but instead of proceeding with an orderly arrangement, he has stormed it with a mob of ideas, tumbling over and destroying one another.

But this confusion and contradiction in Mr. Burke's book, is easily accounted for. When a man in any cause attempts to steer his course by any thing else than some popular truth or principle, he is sure to be lost. It is beyond the compass of his capacity, to keep all the parts of an argument together, and make them unite in one issue, by any other means than having his guide always in view. Neither memory nor invention will supply the want of it. The former fails him, and the latter betrays him.

Notwithstanding the nonsense, for it deserves no better name, that Mr. Burke has asserted about hereditary rights, and hereditary succession, and that a nation has not a right to form a government for itself, it happened to fall in his way to give some account of what government is. "Government," says he, "is a contrivance of human wisdom."

Admitting that government is a contrivance of human wisdom, it

* See p. 52. of this work.—N. B. Since the taking the Bastile, the occurrences have been published : but the matters recorded in this narrative are prior to that period, and some of them, as may easily be seen, can be but very little known.

must necessarily follow, that hereditary succession, and hereditary rights (as they are called) can make no part of it, because it is impossible to make wisdom hereditary; and, on the other hand, *that* cannot be a wise contrivance, which in its operation may commit the government of a nation to the wisdom of an idiot. The ground which Mr. Burke now takes is fatal to every part of his cause. The argument changes from hereditary rights to hereditary wisdom; and the question is, who is the wisest man? He must now show that every one in the line of hereditary succession was a Solomon, or his title is not good to be a king. What a stroke has Mr. Burke now made! to use a sailor's phrase he has *swabbed the deck*, and scarcely left a name legible in the list of kings; and he has mowed down and thinned the house of peers, with a scythe as formidable as death and time.

But Mr. Burke appears to have been aware of this retort, and he has taken care to guard against it, by making government to be not only a *contrivance* of human wisdom, but a *monopoly* of wisdom. He puts the nation as fools on one side, and places his government of wisdom, all wise men of Gotham, on the other side; and he then proclaims, and says, that "*men have a RIGHT that their WANTS should be provided for by this wisdom.*" Having thus made proclamation, he next proceeds to explain to them what their *wants* are, and also what their *rights* are. In this he has succeeded dexterously, for he makes their wants to be a *want* of wisdom; but as this is but cold comfort, he then informs them, that they have a *right* (not to any of the wisdom) but to be governed by it; and in order to impress them with a solemn reverence for this monopoly-government of wisdom, and of its vast capacity for all purposes, possible or impossible, right or wrong, he proceeds with astrological, mysterious importance, to tell them its powers in these words—"The rights of men in government are their advantages: and these are often in balances between differences of good; and in compromises sometimes between *good* and *evil*, and sometimes between *evil* and *evil*. Political reason is a *computing principle*; adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing, morally and not metaphysically or mathematically, true moral demonstrations."

As the wondering audience whom Mr. Burke supposes himself talking to, may not understand all this jargon, I will undertake to be its interpreter. The meaning then, good people, of all this, is,

that government is governed by no principle whatever ; that it can make evil good, or good evil, just as it pleases. In short, that government is arbitrary power.

But there are some things which Mr. Burke has forgotten : 1st, he has not shown where the wisdom originally came from ; and, 2d, he has not shown by what authority it first began to act. In the manner he introduced the matters, it is either government stealing wisdom, or wisdom stealing government. It is without an origin, and its powers without authority. In short, it is usurpation.

Whether it be from a sense of shame, or from a consciousness of some radical defect in government necessary to be kept out of sight, or from both, or from some other cause, I undertake not to determine ; but so it is, that a monarchical reasoner never traces government to its source, or from its source. It is one of the *shibboleths* by which he may be known. A thousand years hence, those who shall live in America, or in France, will look back with contemplative pride on the origin of their governments, and say, *this was the work of our glorious ancestors!* But what can a monarchical talker say ? What has he to exult in ? Alas ! he has nothing. A certain something forbids him to look back to a beginning, lest some robber, or some Robin Hood, should rise from the long obscurity of time, and say, *I am the origin.* Hard as Mr. Burke labored under the regency bill and hereditary succession two years ago, and much as he dived for precedents, he still had not boldness enough to bring up William of Normandy and say, *there is the head of the list, there is the fountain of honor*, the son of a prostitute, and the plunderer of the English nation.

The opinions of men, with respect to government, are changing fast in all countries. The revolutions of America and France have thrown a beam of light over the world, which reaches into man. The enormous expense of governments have provoked people to think by making them feel ; and when once the veil begins to rend, it admits not of repair. Ignorance is of a peculiar nature : once dispelled, it is impossible to re-establish it. It is not originally a thing of itself, but is only the absence of knowledge ; and though man may be *kept* ignorant, he cannot be *made* ignorant. The mind, in discovering truths, acts in the same manner as it acts through the eye in discovering an object ; when once any object has been seen, it is impossible to put the mind back to

the same condition it was in before it saw it. Those who talk of a counter-revolution in France, show how little they understand of man. There does not exist in the compass of language, an arrangement of words to express so much as the means of effecting a counter-revolution. The means must be an obliteration of knowledge; and it has never yet been discovered how to make a man *unknow* his knowledge, or *unthink* his thoughts.

Mr. Burke is laboring in vain to stop the progress of knowledge; and it comes with the worse grace from him, as there is a certain transaction known in the city, which renders him suspected of being a pensioner in a fictitious name. This may account for some strange doctrine he has advanced in his book, which, though he points it at the Revolution society, is effectually directed against the whole nation.

"The king of England," says he, "holds *his* crown (for it does not belong to the nation, according to Mr. Burke) in *contempt* of the choice of the Revolution society, who have not a single vote for a king among them either *individually* or *collectively*; and his majesty's heirs, each in his time and order, will come to the crown *with the same contempt* of their choice, with which his majesty has succeeded to that which he now wears."

As to who is king of England or elsewhere, or whether there is any at all, or whether the people choose a Cherokee chief, or a Hessian hussar for a king, is not a matter that I trouble myself about, be that to themselves; but with respect to the doctrine, so far as it relates to the rights of men and nations, it is as abominable as any thing ever uttered in the most enslaved country under heaven. Whether it sounds worse to my ear, by not being accustomed to hear such despotism, than it does to the ear of another person, I am not so well a judge of: but of its abominable principle, I am at no loss to judge.

It is not the Revolution society that Mr. Burke means; it is the nation, as well in its *original*, as in its *representative* character; and he has taken care to make himself understood, by saying, that they have not a vote either *collectively* or *individually*. The Revolution society is composed of citizens of all denominations, and of members of both houses of parliament, and consequently, if there is not a right to vote in any of the characters, there can be no right to any, either in the nation or in its parliament. This ought to be a caution to every country, how it imports foreign

families to be kings. It is somewhat curious to observe, that although the people of England have been in the habit of talking about the kings, it is always a foreign house of kings ; hating foreigners, yet governed by them. It is now the house of Brunswick, one of the petty tribes of Germany.

It has hitherto been the practice of the English parliaments, to regulate what was called the succession, (taking it for granted, that the nation then continued to accord to the form of annexing a monarchical branch to its government ; for without this, the parliament could not have had authority to have sent either to Holland or to Hanover, or to impose a king upon a nation against its will.) And this must be the utmost limit to which parliament can go upon the case : but the right of the nation goes to the *whole* case, because it is the right of changing the *whole* form of government. The right of a parliament is only a right in trust, a right by delegation, and that but from a very small part of the nation ; and one of its houses has not even this. But the right of the nation is an original right, as universal as taxation. The nation is the paymaster of every thing, and every thing must conform to its general will.

I remember taking notice of a speech in what is called the English house of peers, by the then Earl of Shelbourne, and I think it was at the time he was minister, which is applicable to this case. I do not directly charge my memory with every particular ; but the words and the purport as nearly as I remember, were these : *that the form of government was a matter wholly at the will of a nation at all times : that if it chose a monarchical form, it had a right to have it so, and if it afterwards chose to be a republic, it had a right to be a republic, and to say to a king, we have no longer any occasion for you.*

When Mr. Burke says that “ his majesty’s heirs and successors, each in their time and order, will come to the crown with the same contempt of their choice with which his majesty has succeeded to that he wears,” it is saying too much even to the humblest individual in the country ; part of whose daily labor goes towards making up the million sterling a-year which the country gives a person it styles a king. Government with insolence, is despotism ; but when contempt is added, it becomes worse ; and to pay for contempt is the excess of slavery. This species of government comes from Germany ; and reminds me of what one of the

Brunswick soldiers told me, who was taken prisoner by the Americans in the late war ; “ Ah ! ” said he, “ America is a fine free country, it is worth people’s fighting for ; I know the difference by knowing my own ; in my country, if the prince say, eat straw, we eat straw.”—God help that country, thought I, be it England or elsewhere, whose liberties are not to be protected by German principles of government and princes of Brunswick.

As Mr. Burke sometimes speaks of England, sometimes of France, and sometimes of the world, and of government in general, it is difficult to answer his book without apparently meeting him on the same ground. Although principles of government are general subjects, it is next to impossible, in many cases, to separate them from the idea of place and circumstance ; and the more so when circumstances are put for arguments, which is frequently the case with Mr. Burke.

In the former part of his book, addressing himself to the people of France, he says, “ no experience has taught us, (meaning the English,) that in any other course or method than that of an *hereditary crown*, can our liberties be regularly perpetuated and preserved sacred as our *hereditary right*.” I ask Mr. Burke who is to take them away ? M. de la Fayette, in speaking of France, says, “ *For a nation to be free, it is sufficient that she wills it.* ” But Mr. Burke represents England as wanting capacity to take care of itself ; and that its liberties must be taken care of by a king, holding it in “ contempt.” If England is sunk to this, it is preparing itself to eat straw, as in Hanover or in Brunswick. But besides the folly of the declaration, it happens that the facts are all against Mr. Burke. It was by the government *being hereditary*, that the liberties of the people were endangered. Charles I. and James II. are instances of this truth : yet neither of them went so far as to hold the nation in contempt.

As it is sometimes of advantage to the people of one country, to hear what those of other countries have to say respecting it, it is possible that the people of France may learn something from Mr. Burke’s book, and that the people of England may also learn something from the answers it will occasion. When nations fall out about freedom, a wide field of debate is opened. The argument commences with the rights of war, without its evils ; and as knowledge is the object contended for, the party that sustains the defeat obtains the prize.

Mr. Burke talks about what he calls an hereditary crown, as if it were some production of nature; or as if, like time, it had power to operate not only independently, but in spite of man; or as if it were a thing or a subject universally consented to. Alas! it has none of those properties, but is the reverse of them all. It is a thing of imagination, the propriety of which is more than doubted, and the legality of which in a few years will be denied.

But, to arrange this matter in a clearer view than what general expressions can convey, it will be necessary to state the distinct heads under which (what is called) an hereditary crown, or, more properly speaking, an hereditary succession to the government of a nation, can be considered, which are,

- 1st, The right of a particular family to establish itself.
- 2d. The right of a nation to establish a particular family.

With respect to the *first* of these heads, that of a family establishing itself with hereditary powers on its own authority, and independent of the consent of a nation, all men will concur in calling it despotism; and it would be trespassing on their understanding to attempt to prove it.

But the *second* head, that of a nation establishing a particular family with *hereditary powers*, does not present itself as despotism on the first reflection; but if men will permit a second reflection to take place, and carry that reflection forward but one remove out of their own persons to that of their offspring, they will then see that hereditary succession becomes in its consequences the same despotism to others, which they reprobated for themselves. It operates to preclude the consent of the succeeding generation, and the preclusion of consent is despotism. When the person who at any time shall be in possession of a government, or those who stand in succession to him, shall say to a nation, I hold this power in "contempt" of you, it signifies not on what authority he pretends to say it. It is no relief, but an aggravation to a person in slavery, to reflect that he was sold by his parent; and as that which heightens the criminality of an act cannot be produced to prove the legality of it, hereditary succession cannot be established as a legal thing.

In order to arrive at a more perfect decision on this head, it will be proper to consider the generation which undertakes to establish a family with *hereditary powers*, separately from the generations which are to follow; and also to consider the character in which

the *first* generation acts with respect to succeeding generations.

The generation which selects a person, and puts him at the head of its government, either with the title of king, or any other distinction, acts its *own choice*, be it wise or foolish, as a free agent for itself. The person so set up is not hereditary, but selected and appointed ; and the generation who sets him up, does not live under an hereditary government, but under a government of its own choice and establishment. Were the generation who sets him up, and the person so set up, to live for ever, it never could become hereditary succession : hereditary succession can only follow on death of the first parties.

As therefore hereditary succession is out of the question with respect to the *first* generation, we have now to consider the character in which *that* generation acts with respect to the commencing generation, and to all succeeding ones.

It assumes a character, to which it has neither right nor title. It changes itself from a *legislator* to a *testator*, and affects to make its will, which is to have operation after the demise of the makers, to bequeath the government ; and it not only attempts to bequeath, but to establish on the succeeding generation a new and different form of government under which itself lived. Itself, as is before observed, lived not under an hereditary government, but under a government of its own choice and establishment ; and it now attempts by virtue of a will and testament, (and which it has not authority to make,) to take from the commencing generation, and all future ones, the rights and free agency by which itself acted.

But exclusive of the right which any generation has to act collectively as a testator, the objects to which it applies itself in this case, are not within the compass of any law, or of any will or testament.

The rights of men in society, are neither devisable, nor transferable, nor annihilable, but are descendable only ; and it is not in the power of any generation to intercept finally, and cut off the descent. If the present generation, or any other, are disposed to be slaves, it does not lessen the right of the succeeding generation to be free : wrongs cannot have a legal descent. When Mr. Burke attempts to maintain, that the *English nation did, at the revolution of 1688, most solemnly renounce and abdicate*

their rights for themselves, and for all their posterity for ever, he speaks a language that merits not reply, and which can only excite contempt for his prostitute principles, or pity for his ignorance.

In whatever light hereditary succession, as growing out of the will and testament of some former generation, presents itself, it is an absurdity. A cannot make a will to take from B his property, and give it to C ; yet this is the manner in which (what is called) hereditary succession by law, operates. A certain former generation made a will to take away the rights of the commencing generation and all future ones, and convey those rights to a third person, who afterwards comes forward, and tells them, in Mr. Burke's language, that they have *no rights*, that their rights are already bequeathed to him, and that he will govern in *contempt* of them. From such principles, and such ignorance, good Lord deliver the world !

But, after all, what is this metaphor, called a crown, or rather, what is monarchy ? Is it a thing, or is it a name, or is it a fraud ? Is it a "contrivance of human wisdom," or human craft, to obtain money from a nation under specious pretences ? Is it a thing necessary to a nation ? If it is, in what does that necessity consist, what service does it perform, what is its business, and what are its merits ? Doth the virtue consist in the metaphor, or in the man ? Doth the goldsmith that makes the crown, make the virtue also ? Doth it operate like Fortunatus's wishing cap, or Harlequin's wooden sword ? Doth it make a man a conjuror ? In fine, what is it ? It appears to be a something going much out of fashion, falling into ridicule, and rejected in some countries both as unnecessary and expensive. In America it is considered as an absurdity, and in France it has so far declined, that the goodness of the man, and the respect for his personal character, are the only things that preserve the appearance of its existence.

If government be what Mr. Burke describes it, "a contrivance of human wisdom," I might ask him, if wisdom was at such a low ebb in England, that it was become necessary to import it from Holland and from Hanover ? But I will do the country the justice to say, that that was not the case ; and even if it was, it mistook the cargo. The wisdom of every country, when properly exerted, is sufficient for all its purposes : and there could exist no more real occasion in England to have sent for a Dutch stadtholder, or a German elector, than there was in America to have

done a similar thing. If a country does not understand its own affairs, how is a foreigner to understand them, who knows neither its laws, its manners, nor its language? If there existed a man so transcendantly wise above all others, that his wisdom was necessary to instruct a nation, some reason might be offered for monarchy; but when we cast our eyes about a country, and observe how every part understands its own affairs; and when we look around the world, and see that of all men in it, the race of kings are the most insignificant in capacity, our reason cannot fail to ask us—What are those men kept for?

If there is any thing in monarchy which we people of America do not understand, I wish Mr. Burke would be so kind as to inform us. I see in America, a government extending over a country ten times as large as England, and conducted with regularity for a fortieth part of the expense which government costs in England. If I ask a man in America, if he wants a king, he retorts, and asks me if I take him for an idiot. How is it that this difference happens: are we more or less wise than others? I see in America, the generality of the people living in a style of plenty unknown in monarchical countries; and I see that the principle of its government, which is that of the *equal rights of man*, is making a rapid progress in the world.

If monarchy is a useless thing, why is it kept up any where? And if a necessary thing, how can it be dispensed with? That *civil government* is necessary, all civilized nations will agree in; but civil government is republican government. All that part of the government of England which begins with the office of constable, and proceeds through the department of magistrate, quarter-session, and general assize, including the trial by jury, is republican government. Nothing of monarchy appears in any part of it, except the name which William the conqueror imposed upon the English, that of obliging them to call him “their sovereign lord the king.”

It is easy to conceive, that a band of interested men, such as placemen, pensioners, lords of the bed-chamber, lords of the kitchen, lords of the necessary-house, and the Lord knows what besides, can find as many reasons for monarchy as their salaries, paid at the expense of the country, amount to; but if I ask the farmer, the manufacturer, the merchant, the tradesman, and down through all the occupations of life to the common laborer, what

service monarchy is to him, he can give me no answer. If I ask him what monarchy is, he believes it is something like a sinecure.

Notwithstanding the taxes of England amount to almost seventeen millions a-year, said to be for the expenses of government, it is still evident that the sense of the nation is left to govern itself, and does govern itself by magistrates and juries, almost at its own charge, on republican principles, exclusive of the expense of taxes. The salaries of the judges are almost the only charge that is paid out of the revenue. Considering that all the internal government is executed by the people, the taxes of England ought to be the lightest of any nation in Europe; instead of which, they are the contrary. As this cannot be accounted for on the score of civil government, the subject necessarily extends itself to the monarchical part.

When the people of England sent for George I. (and it would puzzle a wiser man than Mr. Burke to discover for what he could be wanted, or what service he could render) they ought at least to have conditioned for the abandonment of Hanover. Besides the endless German intrigues that must follow from a German elector's being king of England, there is a natural impossibility of uniting in the same person the principles of freedom and the principles of despotism, or, as it is called in England, arbitrary power. A German elector is, in his electorate, a despot: how then should it be expected that he should be attached to principles of liberty in one country, while his interest in another was to be supported by despotism? The union cannot exist; and it might easily have been foreseen, that German electors would make German kings, or in Mr. Burke's words, would assume government with "contempt." The English have been in the habit of considering a king of England only in the character in which he appears to them; whereas the same person, while the connexion lasts, has a home-seat in another country, the interest of which is at variance with their own, and the principles of the government in opposition to each other. To such a person England will appear as a town-residence, and the electorate as the estate. The English may wish, as I believe they do, success to the principles of liberty in France, or in Germany; but a German elector trembles for the fate of despotism in his electorate; and the duchy of Mecklenburg, where the present queen's family governs, is under the same

wretched state of arbitrary power, and the people in slavish vassalage.

There never was a time when it became the English to watch continental intrigues more circumspectly than at the present moment, and to distinguish the politics of the electorate from the politics of the nation. The revolution of France has entirely changed the ground with respect to England and France, as nations: but the German despots, with Prussia at their head, are combining against liberty; and the fondness of Mr. Pitt for office, and the interest which all his family connexions have obtained, do not give sufficient security against this intrigue.

As every thing which passes in the world becomes matter for history, I will now quit this subject, and take a concise review of the state of parties and politics in England, as Mr. Burke has done in France.

Whether the present reign commenced with contempt, I leave to Mr. Burke: certain however it is, that it had strongly that appearance. The animosity of the English nation, it is very well remembered, ran high: and, had the true principles of liberty been as well understood then as they now promise to be, it is probable the nation would not have patiently submitted to so much. George I. and II. were sensible of a rival in the remains of the Stuarts: and as they could not but consider themselves as standing on their good behaviour, they had prudence to keep their German principles of government to themselves; but as the Stuart family wore away, the prudence became less necessary.

The contest between rights, and what were called prerogatives, continued to heat the nation till some time after the conclusion of the American revolution, when all at once it fell a calm; execration exchanged itself for applause, and court popularity sprung up like a mushroom in the night.

To account for this sudden transition, it is proper to observe, that there are two distinct species of popularity; the one excited by merit, the other by resentment. As the nation had formed itself into two parties, and each was extolling the merits of its parliamentary champions for and against the prerogative, nothing could operate to give a more general shock than an immediate coalition of the champions themselves. The partisans of each being thus suddenly left in the lurch, and mutually heated with

disgust at the measure, felt no other relief than uniting in a common execration against both. A higher stimulus of resentment being thus excited than what the contest on prerogatives had occasioned, the nation quitted all former objects of rights and wrongs, and sought only that of gratification.—The indignation at the coalition, so effectually superceded the indignation against the court, as to extinguish it: and without any change of principles on the part of the court, the same people who had reprobated its despotism, united with it, to revenge themselves on the coalition parliament. The case was not, which they liked best—but, which they hated most; and the least hated passed for love. The dissolution of the coalition parliament, as it afforded the means of gratifying the resentment of the nation, could not fail to be popular; and from hence arose the popularity of the court.

Transitions of this kind exhibit to us a nation under the government of temper, instead of a fixed and steady principle; and having once committed itself, however rashly, it feels itself urged along to justify by continuance its first proceeding. Measures which at other times it would censure, it now approves, and acts persuasion upon itself to suffocate its judgment.

On the return of a new parliament, the new minister, Mr. Pitt, found himself in a secure majority; and the nation gave him credit, not out of regard to himself, but because it had resolved to do it out of resentment to another. He introduced himself to public notice by a proposed reform of parliament, which in its operation would have amounted to a public justification of corruption. The nation was to be at the expense of buying up the rotten boroughs, whereas it ought to punish the persons who deal in the traffic.

Passing over the two bubbles, of the Dutch business, and the million a-year to sink the national debt, the matter which is most prominent, is the affair of the regency. Never in the course of my observation, was delusion more successfully acted, nor a nation more completely deceived. But, to make this appear, it will be necessary to go over the circumstances.

Mr. Fox had stated in the house of commons, that the prince of Wales, as heir in succession, had a right in himself to assume the government. This was opposed by Mr. Pitt; and, so far as the opposition was confined to the doctrine, it was just. But the principles which Mr. Pitt maintained on the contrary side, were

as bad, or worse in their extent than those of Mr. Fox ; because they went to establish an aristocracy over the nation, and over the small representation it has in the house of commons.

Whether the English form of government be good or bad, is not in this case the question ; but, taking it as it stands, without regard to its merits or demerits, Mr. Pitt was further from the point than Mr. Fox.

It is supposed to consist of three parts ; while, therefore, the nation is disposed to continue this form, the parts have a *national standing*, independant of each other, and are not the creatures of each other. Had Mr. Fox passed through parliament, and said, that the person alluded to claimed on the ground of the nation, Mr. Pitt must then have contended for (what he called) the right of the parliament, against the right of the nation.

By the appearance which the contest made, Mr. Fox took the hereditary ground ; and Mr. Pitt the parliamentary ground, but the fact is, they both took hereditary ground, and Mr. Pitt took the worst of the two.

What is called the parliament, is made up of two houses ; one of which is more hereditary, and more beyond the control of the nation, than what the crown (as it is called) is supposed to be. It is an hereditary aristocracy, assuming and asserting indefeasible, irrevocable rights and authority, wholly independent of the nation. Where then was the merited popularity of exalting this hereditary power over another hereditary power less independent of the nation than what itself assumed to be, and of absorbing the rights of the nation into a house over which it has neither election nor control ?

The general impulse of the nation was right ; but it acted without reflection. It approved the opposition made to the right set up by Mr. Fox, without perceiving that Mr. Pitt was supporting an another indefeasible right, more remote from the nation in opposition to it.

With respect to the house of commons, it is elected but by a small part of the nation ; but were the election as universal as taxation, which it ought to be, it would still be only the organ of the nation, and cannot possess inherent rights. When the national assembly of France resolves a matter, the resolve is made in right of the nation ; but, Mr. Pitt, on all national questions, so far as they refer to the house of commons, absorbs the right of

the nation into the organ, and makes the organ into a nation, and the nation itself into a cipher.

In a few words, the question on the regency was a question on a million a-year, which is appropriated to the executive department : and Mr. Pitt could not possess himself of any management of this sum, without setting up the supremacy of parliament ; and when this was accomplished, it was indifferent who should be regent, as he must be regent at his own cost. Among the curiosities which this contentious debate afforded, was that of making the great seal into a king ; the affixing of which to an act, was to be royal authority. If, therefore, royal authority is a great seal, it consequently is in itself nothing ; and a good constitution would be of infinitely more value to the nation, than what the three nominal powers, as they now stand are worth.

The continual use of the word *constitution* in the English parliament, shows there is none ; and that the whole is merely a form of government without a constitution, and constituting itself with what powers it pleases. If there was a constitution, it certainly would be referred to ; and the debate on any constitutional point, would terminate by producing the constitution. One member says, this is constitutional ; another says, that is constitutional—To-day it is one thing ; to-morrow it is something else—while the maintaining the debate proves there is none. Constitution is now the cant word of parliament, turning itself to the ear of the nation. Formerly it was the *universal supremacy and the omnipotence of parliament*. But since the progress of liberty in France, those phrases have a despotic harshness in their note ; and the English parliament has caught the fashion from the national assembly, but without the substance, of speaking of a *constitution*.

As the present generation of people in England did not make the government, they are not accountable for any of its defects ; but that sooner or later it must come into their hands to undergo a constitutional reformation, is as certain as that the same thing has happened in France. If France, with a revenue of nearly twenty-four millions sterling, with an extent of rich and fertile country above four times larger than England, with a population of twenty-four millions of inhabitants to support taxation, with upwards of ninety millions sterling of gold and silver circulating in the nation, and with a debt less than the present debt of

England—still found it necessary, from whatever cause, to come to a settlement of its affairs, it solves the problem of funding for both countries.

It is out of the question to say how long, what is called the English constitution, has lasted, and to argue from thence how long it is to last; the question is how long can the funding system last? It is a thing but of modern invention, and has not yet continued beyond the life of a man; yet, in that short space it has so far accumulated, that, together with the current expenses, it requires an amount of taxes at least equal to the whole landed rental of the nation in acres, to defray the annual expenditures. That a government could not always have gone on by the same system which has been followed for the last seventy years, must be evident to every man; and for the same reason it cannot always go on.

The funding system is not money; neither is it, properly speaking, credit. It, in effect, creates upon paper the sum which it appears to borrow, and lays on a tax to keep the imaginary capital alive by the payment of interest, and sends the annuity to market, to be sold for paper already in circulation. If any credit is given, it is to the disposition of the people to pay the tax, and not to the government which lays it on. When this disposition expires, what is supposed to be the credit of government expires with it. The instance of France, under the former government, shows that it is impossible to compel the payment of taxes by force, when a whole nation is determined to take its stand upon that ground.

Mr. Burke, in his review of the finances of France, states the quantity of gold and silver in France, at about eighty-eight millions sterling. In doing this he has, I presume, divided by the difference of exchange, instead of the standard of twenty-four livres to a pound sterling; for M. Neckar's statement, from which Mr. Burke's is taken, is *two thousand two hundred millions of livres*, which is upwards of ninety-one millions and a half sterling.

M. Neckar, in France, and Mr. George Chalmers of the office of trade and plantation in England, of which lord Hawkesbury is president, published nearly about the same time (1786) an account of the quantity of money in each nation, from the returns of the mint of each nation. Mr. Chalmers, from the returns of the English

mint at the tower of London, states the quantity of money in England, including Scotland and Ireland, to be twenty millions sterling.*

M. Neckar† says, that the amount of money in France, re-coined from the old coin which was called in, was two thousand five hundred millions of livres, (upwards of one hundred and four millions sterling,) and, after deducting for waste, and what may be in the West-Indies, and other possible circumstances, states the circulating quantity at home, to be ninety one millions and a half sterling; but, taking it as Mr. Burke has put it, it is sixty eight millions more than the national quantity in England.

That the quantity of money in France cannot be under this sum, may at once be seen from the state of the French revenue, without referring to the records of the French mint for proofs. The revenue of France prior to the revolution, was nearly twenty-four millions sterling; and as paper had then no existence in France, the whole revenue was collected upon gold and silver; and it would have been impossible to have collected such a quantity of revenue upon a less national quantity than M. Neckar has stated. Before the establishment of paper in England, the revenue was about a fourth part of the national amount of gold and silver, as may be known by referring to the revenue prior to king William, and the quantity of money stated to be in the nation at that time, which was nearly as much as it is now.

It can be of no real service to a nation, to impose upon itself, or to permit itself to be imposed upon; but the prejudices of some, and the imposition of others, have always represented France as a nation possessing but little money, whereas the quantity is not only more than four times what the quantity is in England, but is considerably greater on a proportion of numbers. To account for this deficiency on the part of England, some reference should be had to the English system of funding. It operates to multiply paper, and to substitute it in the room of money, in various shapes; and the more paper is multiplied, the more opportunities are afforded to export the specie; and it admits of a possibility (by extending it to small notes) of increasing paper, till there is no money left.

* See Estimate of the comparative Strength of Great Britain, by Geo. Chalmers.

† See Administration of the Finances of France, vol. iii. by M. Neckar

I know this is not a pleasant subject to English readers ; but the matters I am going to mention are so important in themselves, as to require the attention of men interested in money transactions of a public nature. There is a circumstance stated by M. Neckar, in his treatise on the administration of the finances, which has never been attended to in England, but which forms the only basis whereon to estimate the quantity of money (gold and silver) which ought to be in every nation in Europe, to preserve a relative proportion with other nations.

Lisbon and Cadiz are the two ports into which (money) gold and silver from South America are imported, and which afterwards divides and spreads itself over Europe by means of commerce, and increases the quantity of money in all parts of Europe. If, therefore, the amount of the annual importation into Europe can be known, and the relative proportion of the foreign commerce of the several nations by which it is distributed can be ascertained, they give a rule, sufficiently true, to ascertain the quantity of money which ought to be found, in any nation at any given time.

M. Neckar shows from the registers of Lisbon and Cadiz, that the importation of gold and silver into Europe, is five millions sterling annually. He has not taken it on a single year, but on an average of fifteen succeeding years, from 1763, to 1777, both inclusive ; in which time, the amount was one thousand eight hundred million livres, which is seventy-five millions sterling.*

From the commencement of the Hanover succession in 1714, to the time Mr. Chalmers published, is seventy-two years ; and the quantity imported into Europe, in that time, would be three hundred and sixty millions sterling.

If the foreign commerce of Great Britain be stated at a sixth part of what the whole foreign commerce of Europe amounts to (which is probably an inferior estimation to what the gentlemen at the exchange would allow) the proportion which Britain should draw by commerce, of this sum, to keep herself on a proportion with the rest of Europe, would be also a sixth part, which is sixty millions sterling ; and if the same allowance for waste and accident be made for England, which M. Neckar makes for France, the quantity remaining after these deductions, would be

* Administration of the Finances of France, vol. iii.

fifty-two millions, and this sum ought to have been in the nation (at the time Mr. Chalmers published) in addition to the sum which was in the nation at the commencement of the Hanover succession, and to have made in the whole at least sixty-six millions sterling; instead of which there were but twenty millions, which is forty-six millions below its proportionate quantity.

As the quantity of gold and silver, imported into Lisbon and Cadiz is more easily ascertained than that of any commodity imported into England; and as the quantity of money coined at the Tower of London, is still more positively known, the leading facts do not admit of a controversy. Either, therefore, the commerce of England is unproductive of profit, or the gold and silver which it brings in, leak continually away by unseen means, at the average rate of about three quarters of a million a-year, which in the course of seventy-two years, accounts for the deficiency; and its absence is supplied by paper.*

* Whether the English commerce does not bring in money, or whether the government sends it out after it is brought in, is a matter which the parties concerned can best explain; but that the deficiency exists, is not in the power of either to disprove. While Dr. Price, Mr. Eden, (now Auekland,) Mr. Chalmers, and others, were debating whether the quantity of money was greater or less than at the revolution, the circumstance was not adverted to, that since the revolution, there cannot have been less than four hundred millions sterling imported into Europe; and therefore the quantity in England ought at least to have been four times greater than it was at the revolution, to be on a proportion with Europe. What England is now doing by paper, is what she should have been able to do by solid money, if gold and silver had come into the nation in the proportion it ought, or had not been sent out; and she is endeavoring to restore by paper, the balance she has lost by money. It is certain, that the gold and silver which arrive annually in the register-ships to Spain and Portugal, do not remain in those countries. Taking the value half in gold and half in silver, it is about four hundred tons annually; and from the number of ships and galleons employed in the trade of bringing those metals from South-America to Portugal and Spain, the quantity sufficiently proves itself, without referring to the registers.

In the situation England now is, it is impossible she can increase in money. High taxes not only lessen the property of the individuals, but they lessen also the money capital of the nation, by inducing smuggling, which can only be carried on by gold and silver. By the politics which the British government have carried on with the inland powers of Germany and the continent, it has made an enemy of all the maritime powers, and is therefore obliged to keep up a large navy; but though the navy is built in England, the naval stores must be purchased from abroad, and that from countries where the greatest part must be paid for in gold and silver. Some fallacious rumors have been set afloat in England to induce a belief of money, and, among others, that of the French refugees bringing great quantities. The idea is ridiculous. The general part of the money in France is silver; and it would take upwards of twenty of the largest broad wheel wagons, with ten horses each, to remove one million sterling of silver. Is it then to be supposed, that a few people fleeing on horseback or in post-chaises, in a secret manner, and having the French custom-house to pass, and the sea to cross, could bring even a sufficiency for their own expenses?

The revolution of France is attended with many novel circumstances, not only in the political sphere, but in the circle of money transactions. Among others, it shows that a government may be in a state of insolvency, and a nation rich. So far as the fact is confined to the late government of France, it was insolvent ; because the nation would no longer support its extravagance, and therefore it could no longer support itself—but with respect to the nation all the means existed. A government may be said to be insolvent every time it applies to a nation to discharge its arrears. The insolvency of the late government of France, and the present government of England, differed in no other respect than as the disposition of the people differ. The people of France refused their aid to the old government, and the people of England submit to taxation without inquiry. What is called the crown in England has been insolvent several times ; the last of which, publicly known, was in May 1777, when it applied to the nation to discharge upwards of 600,000*l.* private debts, which otherwise it could not pay.

It was the error of Mr. Pitt, Mr. Burke, and all those who were unacquainted with the affairs of France, to confound the French nation with the French government. The French nation, in effect, endeavored to render the late government insolvent, for the purpose of taking government into its own hands : and it reserved its means for the support of the new government. In a country of such vast extent and population as France, the natural means cannot be wanting ; and the political means appear the instant the nation is disposed to permit them. When Mr. Burke, in a speech last winter in the British parliament, *cast his eyes over the map of Europe, and saw a chasm that once was France*, he talked like a dreamer of dreams. The same natural France existed as before, and all the natural means existed with it. The only chasm was that which the extinction of despotism had left, and which was to be filled up with a constitution more formidable in resources than the power which had expired.

When millions of money are spoken of, it should be recollected, that such sums can only accumulate in a country by slow degrees, and a long procession of time. The most frugal system that England could now adopt, would not recover in a century the balance she has lost in money since the commencement of the Hanover succession. She is seventy millions behind France, and she must be, in some considerable proportion, behind every country in Europe, because the returns of the English mint do not show an increase of money, while the registers of Lisbon and Cadiz show an European increase of between three and four hundred millions sterling.

Although the French nation rendered the late government insolvent, it did not permit the insolvency to act towards the creditors ; and the creditors, considering the nation as the real paymaster, and the government only as the agent, rested themselves on the nation, in preference to the government. This appears greatly to disturb Mr. Burke, as the precedent is fatal to the policy by which governments have supposed themselves secure. They have contracted debts, with a view of attaching what is called the monied interest of a nation to their support ; but the example in France shows, that the permanent security of the creditor is in the nation, and not in the government ; and that in all possible evolutions that may happen in governments, the means are always with the nation, and the nation always in existence. Mr. Burke argues, that the creditors ought to have abided the fate of the government which they trusted ; but the national assembly considered them as the creditors of the nation, not of the government—of the master, and not of the steward.

Notwithstanding the late government could not discharge the current expenses, the present government has paid off a great part of the capital. This has been accomplished by two means ; the one by lessening the expenses of government, and the other by the sale of the monastic and ecclesiastical landed estates. The devotees and penitent debauchees, extortioners and misers of former days, to ensure themselves a better world than that they were about to leave, had bequeathed immense property in trust to the priesthood for *pious uses* ; and the priesthood kept it for themselves. The national assembly has ordered it to be sold for the good of the whole nation, and the priesthood to be decently provided for.

In consequence of the revolution, the annual interest of the debt of France will be reduced at least six millions sterling, by paying off upwards of one hundred millions of the capital ; which, with lessening the former expenses of government at least three millions, will place France in a situation worthy the imitation of Europe.

Upon a whole review of the subject, how vast is the contrast ! While Mr. Burke has been talking of a general bankruptcy in France, the national assembly have been paying off the capital of the national debt ; and while taxes have increased nearly a million a-year in England, they have lowered several millions

a-year in France. Not a word has either Mr. Burke or Mr. Pitt said about French affairs, or the state of the French finances, in the present session of parliament. The subject begins to be too well understood, and imposition serves no longer.

There is a general enigma running through the whole of Mr. Burke's book. He writes in a rage against the national assembly: but what is he enraged about? If his assertions were as true as they are groundless, and if France, by her revolution, had annihilated her power, and become what he calls a *chasm*, it might excite the grief of a Frenchman, (considering himself as a national man) and provoke his rage against the national assembly; but why should it excite the rage of Mr. Burke? Alas! it is not the nation of France that Mr. Burke means, but the *court*; and every court in Europe, dreading the same fate, is in mourning. He writes neither in the character of a Frenchman nor an Englishman, but in the fawning character of that creature, known in all countries, as a friend to none, a *courtier*. Whether it be the court of Versailles, or the court of St. James, or of Carlton-house, or the court in expectation, signifies not: for the caterpillar principles of all courts and courtiers are alike. They form a common policy throughout Europe, detached and separate from the interest of the nations, and while they appear to quarrel, they agree to plunder. Nothing can be more terrible to a court or courtier, than the revolution of France. That which is a blessing to nations, is bitterness to them; and, as their existence depends on the duplicity of a country, they tremble at the approach of principles, and dread the precedent that threatens their overthrow.



CONCLUSION.

Reason and ignorance, the opposites of each other, influence the great bulk of mankind. If either of these can be rendered sufficiently extensive in a country, the machinery of government goes easily on. Reason shows itself, and ignorance submits to whatever is dictated to it.

The two modes of government which prevail in the world, are, 1st, government by election and representation; 2d, government

by hereditary succession. The former is generally known by the name of republic ; the latter by that of monarchy and aristocracy.

Those two distinct and opposite forms, erect themselves on the two distinct and opposite bases of reason and ignorance. As the exercise of government requires talents and abilities, and as talents and abilities cannot have hereditary descent, it is evident that hereditary succession requires a belief from man, to which his reason cannot subscribe, and which can only be established upon his ignorance ; and the more ignorant any country is, the better it is fitted for this species of government.

On the contrary, government in a well constituted republic, requires no belief from man beyond what his reason authorizes. He sees the *rationale* of the whole system, its origin, and its operation ; and as it is best supported when best understood, the human faculties act with boldness, and acquire, under this form of government, a gigantic manliness.

As, therefore, each of those forms acts on a different basis, the one moving freely by the aid of reason, the other by ignorance ; we have next to consider, what it is that gives motion to that species of government which is called mixed government, or, as it is sometimes ludicrously styled, a government of *this, that, and t'other*.

The moving power in this species of government is, of necessity, corruption. However imperfect election and representation may be in mixed governments, they still give exertion to a greater portion of reason than is convenient to the hereditary part ; and therefore it becomes necessary to buy the reason up. A mixed government is an imperfect every-thing, cementing and soldering the discordant parts together, by corruption, to act as a whole. Mr. Burke appears highly disgusted, that France, since she had resolved on a revolution, did not adopt what he calls " a British constitution ;" and the regret which he expresses on this occasion, implies a suspicion, that the British constitution needed something to keep its defects in countenance.

In mixed governments, there is no responsibility ; the parts cover each other till responsibility is lost ; and the corruption which moves the machine, contrives at the same time its own escape. When it is laid down as a maxim, that a *king can do no wrong*, it places him in a state of similar security with that of

idiots and persons insane, and responsibility is out of the question, with respect to himself. It then descends upon the minister, who shelters himself under a majority in parliament, which, by places, pensions, and corruption, he can always command; and that majority justifies itself by the same authority with which it protects the minister. In this rotatory motion, responsibility is thrown off from the parts, and from the whole.

When there is a part in a government which can do no wrong, it implies that it does nothing; and is only the machine of another power, by whose advice and direction it acts. What is supposed to be the king, in mixed governments, is the cabinet; and as the cabinet is always a part of the parliament, and the members justifying in one character what they act in another, a mixed government becomes a continual enigma; entailing upon a country, by the quantity of corruption necessary to solder the parts the expense of supporting all the forms of government at once, and finally resolving itself into a government by committee; in which the advisers, the actors, the approvers, the justifiers, the persons responsible, and the persons not responsible, are the same person.

By this pantomimical contrivance, and change of scene and character, the parts help each other out in matters, which, neither of them singly, would presume to act. When money is to be obtained, the mass of variety apparently dissolves, and a profusion of parliamentary praises passes between the parts. Each admires, with astonishment, the wisdom, the liberality and disinterestedness of the other; and all of them breathe a pitying sigh at the burdens of the nation.

But in a well-conditioned republic, nothing of this soldering, praising and pitying, can take place; the representation being equal throughout the country, and complete in itself, however it may be arranged into legislative and executive, they have all one and the same natural source. The parts are not foreigners to each other, like democracy, aristocracy and monarchy. As there are no discordant distinctions, there is nothing to corrupt by compromise, nor confound by contrivance. Public measures appeal of themselves to the understanding of the nation, and, resting on their own merits, disown any flattering application to vanity. The continual whine of lamenting the burden of taxes, however successfully it may be practised in mixed governments,

is inconsistent with the sense and spirit of a republic. If taxes are necessary, they are of course advantageous; but if they require an apology, the apology itself implies an impeachment. Why then is man thus imposed upon, or why does he impose upon himself.

When men are spoken of as kings and subjects, or when government is mentioned under distinct or combined heads of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy, what is it that *reasoning* man is to understand by the terms? If there really existed in the world two more distinct and separate *elements* of human power, we should then see the several origins to which those terms would descriptively apply; but as there is but one species of man, there can be but one element of human power, and that element is man himself. Monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy are but creatures of imagination; and a thousand such may be contrived as well as three.

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From the revolutions of America and France, and the symptoms that have appeared in other countries, it is evident that the opinion of the world is changing with respect to systems of government, and that revolutions are not within the compass of political calculations. The progress of time and circumstances, which men assign to the accomplishment of great changes, is too mechanical to measure the force of the mind, and the rapidity of reflection, by which revolutions are generated; all the old governments have received a shock from those that already appear, and which were once more improbable, and are a greater subject of wonder, than a general revolution in Europe would be now.

When we survey the wretched condition of man, under the monarchical and hereditary systems of government, dragged from his home by one power, or driven by another, and impoverished by taxes more than by enemies, it becomes evident that those systems are bad, and that a general revolution in the principle and construction of governments is necessary.

What is government more than the management of the affairs of a nation? It is not, and from its nature cannot be, the property of any particular man or family, but of the whole commu-

nity at whose expense it is supported ; and though by force or contrivance it has been usurped into an inheritance, the usurpation cannot alter the right of things. Sovereignty, as a matter of right, appertains to the nation only, and not to any individual ; and a nation has at all times an inherent, indefeasible right to abolish any form of government it finds inconvenient, and establish such as accords with its interest, disposition, and happiness. The romantic and barbarous distinctions of men into kings and subjects, though it may suit the condition of courtiers cannot that of citizens ; and is exploded by the principle upon which governments are now founded. Every citizen is a member of the sovereignty, and as such can acknowledge no personal subjection ; and his obedience can be only to the laws.

When men think of what government is, they must necessarily suppose it to possess a knowledge of all the objects and matters upon which its authority is to be exercised. In this view of government, the republican system, as established by America and France, operates to embrace the whole of a nation : and the knowledge necessary to the interest of all the parts, is to be found in the centre, which the parts by representation form : but the old governments are on a construction that excludes knowledge as well as happiness ; government by monks, who know nothing of the world beyond the walls of a convent, is as consistent as government by kings.

What were formerly called revolutions, were little more than a change of persons, or an alteration of local circumstances. They rose and fell like things of course, and had nothing in their existence or their fate that could influence beyond the spot that produced them. But what we now see in the world, from the revolutions of America and France, are a renovation of the natural order of things, a system of principles as universal as truth and the existence of man, and combining moral with political happiness and national prosperity.

“ I. Men are born, and always continue, free and equal, in respect to their rights. Civil distinctions, therefore, can be founded only on public utility.

“ II. The end of all political associations is the preservation of the natural and imprescriptible rights of man, and these rights are liberty, property, security, and resistance of oppression.

“III. The nation is essentially the source of all sovereignty ; nor can any individual, or any body of men, be entitled to any authority which is not expressly derived from it.”

In these principles there is nothing to throw a nation into confusion, by inflaming ambition. They are calculated to call forth wisdom and abilities, and to exercise them for the public good, and not for the emolument or aggrandizement of particular descriptions of men or families. Monarchical sovereignty, the enemy of mankind and the source of misery, is abolished ; and sovereignty itself is restored to its natural and original place, the nation.—Were this the case throughout Europe, the cause of wars would be taken away.

It is attributed to Henry IV. of France, a man of an enlarged and benevolent heart, that he proposed, about the year 1620, a plan for abolishing war in Europe. The plan consisted in constituting an European congress, or, as the French authors style it, a pacific republic ; by appointing delegates from the several nations, who were to act, as a court of arbitration, in any disputes that might arise between nation and nation.

Had such a plan been adopted at the time it was proposed, the taxes of England and France, as two of the parties, would have been at least ten millions sterling annually, to each nation, less than they were at the commencement of the French revolution.

To conceive a cause why such a plan has not been adopted, (and that instead of a congress for the purpose of preventing war, it has been called only to *terminate* a war, after a fruitless expense of several years,) it will be necessary to consider the interest of governments as a distinct interest to that of nations.

Whatever is the cause of taxes to a nation, becomes also the means of revenue to a government. Every war terminates with an addition of taxes, and consequently with an addition of revenue ; and in any event of war, in the manner they are now commenced and concluded, the power and interest of governments are increased. War, therefore, from its productiveness, as it easily furnishes the pretence of necessity for taxes and appointments to places and offices, becomes the principal part of the system of old governments ; and to establish any mode to abolish war, however advantageous it might be to nations, would be to take from such government the most lucrative of its branches. The frivolous matters upon which war is made, show the disposi-

tion and avidity of governments to uphold the system of war, and betray the motives upon which they act.

Why are not republics plunged into war, but because the nature of their government does not admit of an interest distinct from that of the nation? Even Holland, though an ill-constructed republic, and with a commerce extending over the world, existed nearly a century without war: and the instant the form of government was changed in France, the republican principles of peace, and domestic prosperity and economy, arose with the new government; and the same consequences would follow the same causes in other nations.

As war is the system of government on the old construction, the animosity which nations reciprocally entertain, is nothing more than what the policy of their governments excite, to keep up the spirit of the system. Each government accuses the other of perfidy, intrigue and ambition, as a means of heating the imagination of their respective nations, and incensing them to hostilities. Man is not the enemy of man, but through the medium of a false system of government. Instead, therefore, of exclaiming against the ambition of kings, the exclamation should be directed against the principle of such governments; and instead of seeking to reform the individual, the wisdom of a nation should apply itself to reform the system.

Whether the forms and maxims of governments which are still in practice, were adapted to the condition of the world at the period they were established, is not in this case the question. The older they are the less correspondence can they have with the present state of things. Time, and change of circumstances and opinions have the same progressive effect in rendering modes of government obsolete, as they have upon customs and manners. Agriculture, commerce, manufactures, and the tranquil arts, by which the prosperity of nations is best promoted, require a different system of government, and a different species of knowledge to direct its operations, to what might have been the former condition of the world.

As it is not difficult to perceive, from the enlightened state of mankind, that the hereditary governments are verging to their decline, and that revolutions on the broad basis of national sovereignty, and government by representation, are making their way in Europe, it would be an act of wisdom to anticipate their

approach, and produce revolutions by reason and accommodation, rather than commit them to the issue of convulsions.

From what we now see, nothing of reform in the political world ought to be held improbable. It is an age of revolutions, in which every thing may be looked for. The intrigue of courts, by which the system of war is kept up, may provoke a confederation of nations to abolish it : and an European congress to patronize the progress of free government, and promote the civilization of nations with each other is an event nearer in probability, than once were the revolutions and alliance of France and America.

RIGHTS OF MAN.

PART II.

COMBINING PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE.

VOL.

19

TO M. DE LA FAYETTE.

AFTER an acquaintance of nearly fifteen years, in difficult situations in America, and various consultations in Europe, I feel a pleasure in presenting you this small treatise, in gratitude for your services to my beloved America, and as a testimony of my esteem for the virtues, public and private, which I know you to possess.

The only point upon which I could ever discover that we differed, was not as to principles of government, but as to time. For my own part, I think it equally as injurious to good principles to permit them to linger, as to push them on too fast. That which you suppose accomplishable in fourteen or fifteen years, I may believe practicable in a much shorter period. Mankind, as it appears to me, are always ripe enough to understand their true interest, provided it be presented clearly to their understanding, and that in a manner not to create suspicion by any thing like self-design, nor to offend by assuming too much. Where we would wish to reform we must not reproach.

When the American revolution was established, I felt a disposition to sit serenely down and enjoy the calm. It did not appear to me that any object could afterwards arise great enough to make me quit tranquillity, and feel as I had felt before. But when principle, and not place, is the energetic cause of action, a man, I find, is every where the same.

I am now once more in the public world; and as I have not a right to contemplate on so many years of remaining life as you

have, I am resolved to labour as fast as I can; and as I am anxious for your aid and your company, I wish you to hasten your principles and overtake me.

If you make a campaign the ensuing spring, which it is most probable there will be no occasion for, I will come and join you. Should the campaign commence, I hope it will terminate in the extinction of German despotism, and in establishing the freedom of all Germany. When France shall be surrounded with revolutions, she will be in peace and safety, and her taxes, as well as those of Germany, will consequently become less.

Your sincere,

Affectionate friend,

THOMAS PAINE.

London, Feb. 9, 1792.

PREFACE.

WHEN I began the chapter entitled the *Conclusion*, in the former part of the Rights of Man, published last year, it was my intention to have extended it to a greater length; but in casting the whole matter in my mind which I wished to add, I found that I must either make the work too bulky, or contract my plan too much. I therefore brought it to a close as soon as the subject would admit, and reserved what I had further to say to another opportunity.

Several other reasons contributed to produce this determination. I wished to know the manner in which a work, written in a style of thinking and expression at variance with what had been customary in England, would be received, before I proceeded further. A great field was opening to the view of mankind by means of the French revolution. Mr. Burke's outrageous opposition thereto brought the controversy into England. He attacked principles which he knew (from information) I would contest with him, because they are principles I believe to be good, and which I have contributed to establish, and conceive myself bound to defend. Had he not urged the controversy, I had most probably been a silent man.

Another reason for deferring the remainder of the work was, that Mr. Burke promised in his first publication to renew the subject at another opportunity, and to make a comparison of what he

called the English and French constitutions. I therefore held myself in reserve for him. He has published two works since, without doing this, which he certainly would not have omitted, had the comparison been in his favour.

In his last work, his "Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs," he has quoted about ten pages from the Rights of Man, and having given himself the trouble of doing this, says, "he shall not attempt in the smallest degree to refute them," meaning the principles therein contained. I am enough acquainted with Mr. Burke, to know, that he would if he could. But instead of contesting them, he immediately after consoles himself with saying that "he has done his part."—He has not done his part. He has not performed his promise of a comparison of constitutions. He started a controversy, he gave the challenge, and has fled from it; and he is now a *case in point* with his own opinion, that "*the age of chivalry is gone!*"

The title, as well as the substance of his last work, his Appeal, is his condemnation. Principles must rest on their own merits, and if they are good they certainly will. To put them under the shelter of other men's authority, as Mr. Burke has done, serves to bring them into suspicion. Mr. Burke is not very fond of dividing his honors, but in this he is artfully dividing the disgrace.

But who are those to whom Mr. Burke has appealed? A set of childish thinkers and half-way politicians born in the last century; men who went no further with any principle than as it suited their purpose as a party; the nation sees nothing in such works, or such politics, worthy its attention. A little matter will move a party, but it must be something great that moves a nation.

Though I see nothing in Mr. Burke's Appeal worth taking notice of, there is, however, one expression upon which I shall offer a few remarks.—After quoting largely from the Rights of Man, and declining to contest the principles contained in that work, he says, "This will most probably be done (*if such writings shall be thought to deserve any other refutation than that of criminal justice*) by others, who may think with Mr. Burke and with the same zeal."

In the first place, it has not been done by any body. Not less, I believe, than eight or ten pamphlets, intended as answers to the former part of the Rights of Man have been published by different persons, and not one of them, to my knowledge, has extended to

a second edition, nor are even the titles of them so much as generally remembered. As I am averse to unnecessarily multiplying publications, I have answered none of them. And as I believe that a man may write himself out of reputation when nobody else can do it, I am careful to avoid that rock.

But as I decline unnecessary publications on the one hand, so would I avoid any thing that looked like sullen pride on the other. If Mr. Burke, or any person on his side the question, will produce an answer to the Rights of Man, that shall extend to an half, or even a fourth part of the number of copies to which the Rights of Man extended, I will reply to his work. But, until this be done, I shall so far take the sense of the public for my guide (and the world knows I am not a flatterer) that what they do not think worth while to read, is not worth mine to answer. I suppose the number of copies to which the first part of the Rights of Man extended, taking England, Scotland, and Ireland, is not less than between forty and fifty thousand.

I now come to remark on the remaining part of the quotation I have made from Mr. Burke.

"If," says he, "such writings shall be thought to deserve any other refutation than that of *criminal* justice."

Pardoning the pun, it must be *criminal* justice indeed that should condemn a work as a substitute for not being able to refute it. The greatest condemnation that could be passed upon it would be a refutation. But, in proceeding by the method Mr. Burke alludes to, the condemnation would in the final event, pass upon the criminality of the process and not upon the work, and in this case, I had rather be the author, than be either the judge or the jury that should condemn it.

But to come at once to the point. I have differed from some professional gentlemen on the subject of prosecutions, and I since find they are falling into my opinion, which I shall here state as fully, but as concisely as I can.

I will first put a case with respect to any law, and then compare it with a government, or with what in England is, or has been, called a constitution.

It would be an act of despotism, or what in England is called arbitrary power, to make a law to prohibit investigating the principles, good or bad, on which such a law, or any other is founded.

If a law be bad, it is one thing to oppose the practice of it, but it is quite a different thing to expose its errors, to reason on its defects, and to show cause why it should be repealed, or why another ought to be substituted in its place. I have always held it an opinion (making it also my practice) that it is better to obey a bad law, making use at the same time of every argument to show its errors, and procure its repeal, than forcibly to violate it; because the precedent of breaking a bad law might weaken the force, and lead to a discretionary violation, of those which are good.

The case is the same with respect to principles and forms of government, or to what are called constitutions, and the parts of which they are composed.

It is for the good of nations, and not for the emolument or aggrandizement of particular individuals, that government ought to be established, and that mankind are at the expense of supporting it. The defects of every government and constitution both as to principle and form, must, on a parity of reasoning, be as open to discussion as the defects of a law, and it is a duty which every man owes to society to point them out. When those defects and the means of remedying them, are generally seen by a nation, that nation will reform its government or its constitution in the one case, as the government repealed or reformed the law in the other. The operation of government is restricted to the making and the administering of laws; but it is to a nation that the right of forming or reforming, generating or regenerating constitutions and governments belong; and consequently those subjects, as subjects of investigation, are always before a country *as a matter of right*, and cannot, without invading the general rights of that country, be made subjects for prosecution. On this ground I will meet Mr. Burke whenever he pleases. It is better that the whole argument should come out, than to seek to stifle it. It was himself that opened the controversy, and he ought not to desert it.

I do not believe that monarchy and aristocracy will continue seven years longer in any of the enlightened countries of Europe. If better reasons can be shown for them than against them, they will stand; if the contrary, they will not. Mankind are not now to be told they shall not think, or they shall not read: and publications that go no further than to investigate principles of government, to invite men to reason and to reflect, and to show the

errors and excellencies of different systems, have a right to appear. If they do not excite attention, they are not worth the trouble of a prosecution; and if they do, the prosecution will amount to nothing, since it cannot amount to a prohibition of reading. This would be a sentence on the public, instead of the author, and would also be the most effectual mode of making or hastening revolutions.

On all cases that apply universally to a nation, with respect to systems of government, a jury of *twelve* men is not competent to decide. Where there are no witnesses to be examined, no facts to be proved, and where the whole matter is before the whole public, and the merits or demerits of it resting on their opinion; and where there is nothing to be known in a court, but what every body knows out of it, every twelve men are equally as good a jury as the other, and would most probably reverse each other's verdict; or, from the variety of their opinions, not be able to form one. It is one case whether a nation approve a work, or a plan; but it is quite another case whether it will commit to any such jury the power of determining whether that nation has a right to, or shall reform its government, or not. I mention these cases, that Mr. Burke may see I have not written on government without reflecting on what is law, as well as on what are rights.—The only effectual jury in such cases would be a convention of the whole nation fairly elected; for, in all such cases, the whole nation is the vicinage.

As to the prejudices which men have from education and habit, in favour of any particular form or system of government, those prejudices have yet to stand the test of reason and reflection. In fact such prejudices are nothing. No man is prejudiced in favour of a thing knowing it to be wrong. He is attached to it on the belief of its being right; and when he sees it is not so, the prejudice will be gone. We have but a defective idea of what prejudice is. It might be said that until men think for themselves the whole is prejudice and *not opinion*; for that only is opinion which is the result of reason and reflection. I offer this remark, that Mr. Burke may not confide too much in what has been the customary prejudices of the country.

But admitting governments to be changed all over Europe, it certainly may be done without convulsion or revenge. It is not

worth making changes or revolutions, unless it be for some great national benefit, and when this shall appear to a nation, the danger will be, as in America and France, to those who oppose; and with this reflection I close my preface.

THOMAS PAINE.

London, Feb. 9, 1792.

RIGHTS OF MAN.

PART II.



INTRODUCTION.

WHAT Archimedes said of the mechanical powers, may be applied to reason and liberty: "*Had we,*" said he, "*a place to stand upon, we might raise the world.*"

The revolution in America presented in politics what was only theory in mechanics. So deeply rooted were all the governments of the old world, and so effectually had the tyranny and the antiquity of habit established itself over the mind, that no beginning could be made in Asia, Africa or Europe, to reform the political condition of man. Freedom had been hunted round the globe; reason was considered as rebellion; and the slavery of fear had made men afraid to think.

But such is the irresistible nature of truth, that all it asks, and all it wants, is the liberty of appearing. The sun needs no inscription to distinguish him from darkness, and no sooner did the American governments display themselves to the world, than despotism felt a shock, and man began to contemplate redress.

The independence of America, considered merely as a separation from England, would have been a matter but of little importance, had it not been accompanied by a revolution in the principles and practice of government. She made a stand, not for herself only, but for the world, and looked beyond the advantages which *she* could receive. Even the Hessian, though hired to fight

against her, may live to bless his defeat; and England, condemning the viciousness of its government, rejoice in its miscarriage.

As America was the only spot in the political world where the principles of universal reformation could begin, so also was it the best in the natural world. An assemblage of circumstances conspired, not only to give birth, but to add gigantic maturity to its principles. The scene which that country presents to the eye of the spectator, has something in it which generates and enlarges great ideas. Nature appears to him in magnitude. The mighty objects he beholds, act upon his mind by enlarging it, and he partakes of the greatness he contemplates. Its first settlers were emigrants from different European nations, and of diversified professions of religion, retiring from the governmental persecutions of the old world, and meeting in the new, not as enemies, but as brothers. The wants which necessarily accompany the cultivation of a wilderness, produced among them a state of society, which countries long harassed by the quarrels and intrigues of governments, had neglected to cherish. In such a situation man becomes what he ought to be. He sees his species, not with the inhuman idea of a natural enemy, but as kindred; and the example shows to the artificial world, that man must go back to nature for information.

From the rapid progress which America makes in every species of improvement, it is rational to conclude that if the governments of Asia, Africa and Europe, had begun on a principle similar to that of America, or had they not been very early corrupted therefrom, those countries must by this time have been in a far superior condition to what they are. Age after age has passed away, for no other purpose than to behold their wretchedness. Could we suppose a spectator who knew nothing of the world, and who was put into it merely to make his observations, he would take a great part of the old world to be new, just struggling with the difficulties and hardships of an infant settlement. He could not suppose that the hordes of miserable poor, with which old countries abound, could be any other than those who had not yet been able to provide for themselves. Little would he think they were the consequence of what in such countries is called government.

If, from the more wretched parts of the old world, we look at those which are in an advanced state of improvement, we still find

the greedy hand of government thrusting itself into every corner and crevice of industry, and grasping the spoil of the multitude. Invention is continually exercised, to furnish new pretences for revenue and taxation. It watches prosperity as its prey, and permits none to escape without a tribute.

As revolutions have begun, (and as the probability is always greater against a thing beginning, than of proceeding after it has begun) it is natural to expect that other revolutions will follow. The amazing and still increasing expenses with which old governments are conducted, the numerous wars they engage in or provoke, the embarrassments they throw in the way of universal civilization and commerce, and the oppression and usurpation acted at home, have wearied out the patience, and exhausted the property of the world. In such a situation, and with such examples already existing, revolutions are to be looked for. They are become subjects of universal conversation, and may be considered as the *order of the day*.

If systems of government can be introduced less expensive, and more productive of general happiness, than those which have existed, all attempts to oppose their progress will in the end prove fruitless. Reason, like time, will make its own way, and prejudice will fall in the combat with interest. If universal peace, harmony, civilization and commerce are ever to be the happy lot of man, it cannot be accomplished but by a revolution in the present system of governments. All the monarchical governments are military. War is their trade, plunder and revenue their objects. While such governments continue, peace has not the absolute security of a day. What is the history of all monarchical governments but a disgusting picture of human wretchedness, and the accidental respite of a few years repose? Wearied with war, and tired with human butchery, they sat down to rest and called it peace. This certainly is not the condition that heaven intended for man; and if *this be monarchy*, well might monarchy be reckoned among the sins of the Jews.

The revolutions which formerly took place in the world, had nothing in them that interested the bulk of mankind. They extended only to a change of persons and measures, but not of principles, and rose or fell among the common transactions of the moment. What we now behold, may not improperly be called a "*counter revolution*." Conquest and tyranny, at some early

period, dispossessed man of his rights, and he is now recovering them. And as the tide of human affairs has its ebb and flow in directions contrary to each other, so also is it in this. Government founded on a *moral theory, on a system of universal peace, on the indefeasible, hereditary rights of man*, is now revolving from west to east by a stronger impulse than the government of the sword revolved from east to west. It interests not particular individuals but nations in its progress, and promises a new era to the human race.

The danger to which the success of revolutions is most exposed, is that of attempting them before the principles on which they proceed, and the advantages to result from them, are sufficiently understood. Almost every thing appertaining to the circumstances of a nation has been absorbed and confounded under the general and mysterious word *government*. Though it avoids taking to its account the errors it commits, and the mischiefs it occasions, it fails not to arrogate to itself whatever has the appearance of prosperity. It robs industry of its honors, by pedantically making itself the cause of its effects; and purloins from the general character of man, the merits that appertain to him as a social being.

It may therefore be of use in this day of revolutions, to discriminate between those things which are the effect of government, and those which are not. This will best be done by taking a review of society and civilization, and the consequences resulting therefrom, as things distinct from what are called governments. By beginning with this investigation, we shall be able to assign effects to their proper causes, and analyze the mass of common errors.



CHAPTER I.

OF SOCIETY AND CIVILIZATION.

A GREAT part of that order which reigns among mankind is not the effect of government. It had its origin in the principles of society, and the natural constitution of man. It existed prior to

government, and would exist if the formality of government was abolished. The mutual dependence and reciprocal interest which man has in man, and all the parts of a civilized community upon each other, create that great chain of connexion which holds it together. The landholder, the farmer, the manufacturer, the merchant, the tradesman, and every occupation prospers by the aid which each receives from the other, and from the whole. Common interest regulates their concerns, and forms their laws; and the laws which common usage ordains, have a greater influence than the laws of government. In fine, society performs for itself almost every thing which is ascribed to government.

To understand the nature and quantity of government proper for man, it is necessary to attend to his character. As nature created him for social life, she fitted him for the station she intended. In all cases she made his natural wants greater than his individual powers. No one man is capable, without the aid of society, of supplying his own wants; and those wants acting upon every individual, impel the whole of them into society, as naturally as gravitation acts to a centre.

But she has gone further. She has not only forced man into society by a diversity of wants, which the reciprocal aid of each other can supply, but she has implanted in him a system of social affections, which, though not necessary to his existence, are essential to his happiness. There is no period in life when this love for society ceases to act. It begins and ends with our being.

If we examine, with attention, into the composition and constitution of man, the diversity of his wants, and the diversity of talents in different men for reciprocally accommodating the wants of each other, his propensity to society, and consequently to preserve the advantages resulting from it, we shall easily discover, that a great part of what is called government is mere imposition.

Government is no further necessary than to supply the few cases to which society and civilization are not conveniently competent; and instances are not wanting to show that every thing which government can usefully add thereto, has been performed by the common consent of society, without government.

For upwards of two years from the commencement of the American war, and a longer period, in several of the American states, there were no established forms of government. The old governments had been abolished, and the country was too much

occupied in defence, to employ its attention in establishing new governments ; yet, during this interval, order and harmony were preserved as inviolate as in any country in Europe. There is a natural aptness in man, and more so in society, because it embraces a greater variety of abilities and resources, to accommodate itself to whatever situation it is in. The instant formal government is abolished, society begins to act. A general association takes place, and common interest produces common security.

So far is it from being true, as has been pretended, that the abolition of any formal government is the dissolution of society it acts by a contrary impulse, and brings the latter the closer together. All that part of its organization which it had committed to its government, devolves again upon itself, and acts through its medium. When men, as well from natural instinct, as from reciprocal benefits, have habituated themselves to social and civilized life, there is always enough of its principles in practice to carry them through any changes they may find necessary or convenient to make in their government. In short, man is so naturally a creature of society, that it is almost impossible to put him out of it.

Formal government makes but a small part of civilized life ; and when even the best that human wisdom can devise is established, it is a thing more in name and idea, than in fact. It is to the great and fundamental principles of society and civilization—to the common usage universally consented to, and mutually and reciprocally maintained—to the unceasing circulation of interest, which, passing through its innumerable channels, invigorates the whole mass of civilized man—it is to these things, infinitely more than any thing which even the best instituted government can perform, that the safety and prosperity of the individual and of the whole depends.

The more perfect civilization is, the less occasion has it for government, because the more does it regulate its own affairs, and govern itself ; but so contrary is the practice of old governments to the reason of the case, that the expenses of them increase in the proportion they ought to diminish. It is but few general laws that civilized life requires, and those of such common usefulness, that whether they are enforced by the forms of government or not, the effect will be nearly the same. If we consider what the principles are that first condense man into society, and what the

motives that regulate their mutual intercourse afterwards we shall find, by the time we arrive at what is called government, that nearly the whole of the business is performed by the natural operation of the parts upon each other.

Man, with respect to all those matters, is more a creature of consistency than he is aware of, or than governments would wish him to believe. All the great laws of society are laws of nature. Those of trade and commerce, whether with respect to the intercourse of individuals, or of nations, are laws of mutual and reciprocal interest. They are followed and obeyed, because it is the interest of the parties so to do, and not on account of any formal laws their governments may impose or interpose.

But how often is the natural propensity to society disturbed or destroyed by the operations of government! When the latter, instead of being ingrafted on the principles of the former, assumes to exist for itself, and acts by partialities of favor and oppression, it becomes the cause of the mischiefs it ought to prevent.

If we look back to the riots and tumults, which at various times have happened in England, we shall find, that they did not proceed from the want of a government, but that government was itself the generating cause; instead of consolidating society, it divided it; it deprived it of its natural cohesion, and engendered discontents and disorders, which otherwise would not have existed. In those associations which men promiscuously form for the purpose of trade, or of any concern, in which government is totally out of the question, and in which they act merely on the principles of society, we see how naturally the various parties unite; and this shows, by comparison, that governments, so far from being always the cause or means of order, are often the destruction of it. The riots of 1780 had no other source than the remains of those prejudices, which the government itself had encouraged. But with respect to England there are also other causes.

Excess and inequality of taxation, however disguised in the means, never fail to appear in their effect. As a great mass of the community are thrown thereby into poverty and discontent, they are constantly on the brink of commotion; and, deprived, as they unfortunately are, of the means of information, are easily heated to outrage. Whatever the apparent cause of any riots may be, the real one is always want of happiness. It shows that

something is wrong in the system of government, that injures the felicity by which society is to be preserved.

But as fact is superior to reasoning, the instance of America presents itself to confirm these observations. If there is a country in the world, where concord, according to common calculation, would be least expected, it is America. Made up, as it is, of people from different nations,* accustomed to different forms and habits of government, speaking different languages, and more different in their modes of worship, it would appear that the union of such a people was impracticable; but by the simple operation of constructing government on the principles of society and the rights of man, every difficulty retires, and all the parts are brought into cordial unison. There, the poor are not oppressed, the rich are not privileged. Industry is not mortified by the splendid extravagance of a court rioting at its expense. Their taxes are few, because their government is just; and as there is nothing to render them wretched, there is nothing to engender riots and tumults.

A metaphysical man, like Mr. Burke, would have tortured his invention to discover how such a people could be governed. He would have supposed that some must be managed by fraud, others by force, and all by some contrivance; that genius must be hired to impose upon ignorance, and show and parade to fascinate the vulgar. Lost in the abundance of his researches, he would have resolved and re-resolved, and finally overlooked the plain and easy road that lay directly before him.

One of the great advantages of the American revolution has been, that it led to a discovery of the principles, and laid open the imposition of governments. All the revolutions till then had been worked within the atmosphere of a court, and never on the great floor of a nation. The parties were always of the class of

* That part of America which is generally called New-England, including New-Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode-Island, and Connecticut, is peopled chiefly by English descendants. In the state of New-York about half are Dutch, the rest English, Scotch, and Irish. In New-Jersey, a mixture of English and Dutch, with some Scotch and Irish. In Pennsylvania about one third are English, another Germans, and the remainder Scotch and Irish, with some Swedes. The states to the southward have a greater proportion of English than the middle states, but in all of them there is a mixture; and besides those enumerated, these are a considerable number of French, and some few of all the European nations, lying on the coast. The most numerous religious denomination are the Presbyterians; but no one sect is established above another, and all men are equally citizens.

courtiers; and whatever was their rage for reformation, they carefully preserved the fraud of the profession.

In all cases they took care to represent government as a thing made up of mysteries, which only themselves understood: and they hid from the understanding of the nation, the only thing that was beneficial to know, namely, *that government is nothing more than a national association acting on the principles of society.*

Having thus endeavored to show, that the social and civilized state of man is capable of performing within itself, almost every thing necessary to its protection and government, it will be proper, on the other hand, to take a review of the present old governments, and examine whether their principles and practice are correspondent thereto.



CHAPTER II.

ON THE ORIGIN OF THE PRESENT OLD GOVERNMENTS.

It is impossible that such governments as have hitherto existed in the world, could have commenced by any other means than a total violation of every principle, sacred and moral. The obscurity in which the origin of all the present old governments is buried, implies the iniquity and disgrace with which they began. The origin of the present governments of America and France will ever be remembered, because it is honorable to record it; but with respect to the rest, even flattery has consigned them to the tomb of time, without an inscription.

It could have been no difficult thing in the early and solitary ages of the world, while the chief employment of men was that of attending flocks and herds, for a banditti of ruffians to overrun a country, and lay it under contribution. Their power being thus established, the chief of the band contrived to lose the name of robber in that of monarch; and hence the origin of monarchy and kings.

The origin of the government of England, so far as it relates to what is called its line of monarchy, being one of the latest, is perhaps the best recorded. The hatred which the Norman invasion and tyranny begat, must have been deeply rooted in the nation, to have outlived the contrivance to obliterate it. Though not a courtier will talk of the curfew-bell, not a village in England has forgotten it.

Those bands of robbers having parcelled out the world, and divided it into dominions, began, as is naturally the case, to quarrel with each other. What at first was obtained by violence, was considered by others as lawful to be taken, and a second plunderer succeeded the first. They alternately invaded the dominions which each had assigned to himself, and the brutality with which they treated each other explains the original character of monarchy. It was ruffian torturing ruffian. The conqueror considered the conquered not as his prisoner, but his property. He led him in triumph rattling in chains, and doomed him, at pleasure, to slavery or death. As time obliterated the history of their beginning, their successors assumed new appearances, to cut off the entail of their disgrace, but their principles and objects remained the same. What at first was plunder assumed the softer name of revenue; and the power originally usurped, they affected to inherit.

From such beginning of governments, what could be expected, but a continual system of war and extortion? It has established itself into a trade. The vice is not peculiar to one more than to another, but is the common principle of all. There does not exist within such governments a stamina whereon to ingraft reformation; and the shortest and most effectual remedy is to begin anew.

What scenes of horror, what perfection of iniquity, present themselves in contemplating the character, and reviewing the history of such governments! If we would delineate human nature with a baseness of heart, and hypocrisy of countenance, that reflection would shudder at and humanity disown, it is kings, courts, and cabinets, that must sit for the portrait. Man, as he is naturally, with all his faults about him, is not up to the character.

Can we possibly suppose that if government had originated in a right principle, and had not an interest in pursuing a wrong one, that the world could have been in the wretched and quarrelsome

condition we have seen it? What inducement has the farmer, while following the plough, to lay aside his peaceful pursuits and go to war with the farmer of another country? Or what inducement has the manufacturer? What is dominion to them, or to any class of men in a nation? Does it add an acre to any man's estate, or raise its value? Are not conquest and defeat each of the same price, and taxes the never-failing consequence? Though this reasoning may be good to a nation, it is not so to a government. War is the faro-table of governments, and nations the dupes or the game.

If there is any thing to wonder at in this miserable scene of governments, more than might be expected, it is the progress which the peaceful arts of agriculture, manufactures, and commerce have made, beneath such a long accumulating load of discouragement and oppression. It serves to show that instinct in animals does not act with stronger impulse than the principles of society and civilization operate in man. Under all discouragements, he pursues his object, and yields to nothing but impossibilities.



CHAPTER III.

OF THE OLD AND NEW SYSTEMS OF GOVERNMENT.

NOTHING can appear more contradictory than the principles on which the old governments began, and the condition to which society, civilization and commerce, are capable of carrying mankind. Government, on the old system, is an assumption of power, for the aggrandizement of itself; on the new, a delegation of power for the common benefit of society. The former supports itself by keeping up a system of war; the latter promotes a system of peace, as the true means of enriching a nation. The one encourages national prejudices; the other promotes universal society as the means of universal commerce. The one measures its prosperity by the quantity of revenue it extorts; the other proves its excellence, by the small quantity of taxes it requires.

Mr. Burke has talked of old and new whigs. If he can amuse himself with childish names and distinctions, I shall not interrupt

his pleasure. It is not to him, but to the Abbe Sieyes, that I address this chapter. I am already engaged to the latter gentleman, to discuss the subject of monarchical government; and as it naturally occurs in comparing the old and new systems, I make this the opportunity of presenting to him my observations. I shall occasionally take Mr. Burke in my way.

Though it might be proved that the system of government now called the *new*, is the most ancient in principle of all that have existed, being founded on the original inherent rights of man: yet, as tyranny and the sword have suspended the exercise of those rights for many centuries past, it serves better the purpose of distinction to call it the *new*, than to claim the right of calling it the old.

The first general distinction between those two systems, is, that the one now called the old is *hereditary*, either in whole or in part; and the new is entirely *representative*. It rejects all hereditary government:

1st, As being an imposition on mankind.

2d, As inadequate to the purposes for which government is necessary.

With respect to the first of these heads—It cannot be proved by what right hereditary government could begin: neither does there exist within the compass of mortal power, a right to establish it. Man has no authority over posterity in matters of personal right; and therefore, no man, or body of men, had, or can have, a right to set up hereditary government. Were even ourselves to come again into existence, instead of being succeeded by posterity, we have not now the right of taking from ourselves the rights which would then be ours. On what ground, then, do we pretend to take them from others?

All hereditary government is in its nature tyranny. An heritable crown, or an heritable throne, or by what other fanciful name such things may be called, have no other significant explanation than that mankind are heritable property. To inherit a government, is to inherit the people, as if they were flocks and herds.

With respect to the second head, that of being inadequate to the purposes for which government is necessary, we have only to consider what government essentially is, and compare it with the circumstances to which hereditary government is subject

Government ought to be a thing always in full maturity. It ought to be so constructed as to be superior to all the accidents to which individual man is subject : and, therefore, hereditary succession, by being *subject to them all*, is the most irregular and imperfect of all the systems of government.

We have heard the *rights of man* called a *levelling* system ; but the only system to which the word *levelling* is truly applicable, is the hereditary monarchical system. It is a system of *mental levelling*. It indiscriminately admits every species of character to the same authority. Vice and virtue, ignorance and wisdom, in short, every quality, good or bad, is put on the same level. Kings succeed each other, not as rationals, but as animals. Can we then be surprised at the abject state of the human mind in monarchical countries, when the government itself is formed on such an abject levelling system ?—It has no fixed character. To-day it is one thing ; and to-morrow it is something else. It changes with the temper of every succeeding individual, and is subject to all the varieties of each. It is government through the medium of passions and accidents. It appears under all the various characters of childhood, decrepitude, dotage, a thing at nurse, in leading strings, or on crutches. It reverses the wholesome order of nature. It occasionally puts children over men, and the conceits of non-age over wisdom and experience. In short, we cannot conceive a more ridiculous figure of government, than hereditary succession, in all its cases, presents.

Could it be made a decree in nature, or an edict registered in heaven, and man could know it, that virtue and wisdom should invariably appertain to hereditary succession, the objections to it would be removed ; but when we see that nature acts as if she disowned and sported with the hereditary system ; that the mental characters of successors, in all countries, are below the average of human understanding ; that one is a tyrant, another an idiot, a third insane, and some all three together, it is impossible to attach confidence to it, when reason in man has power to act.

It is not to the abbe Sieyes that I need apply this reasoning ; he has already saved me that trouble by giving his own opinion on the case. “ If it be asked,” says he, “ what is my opinion with respect to hereditary right, I answer, without hesitation, that, in good theory, an hereditary transmission of any power or office, can never accord with the laws of true representation. Hereditary-

snip, is, in this sense, as much an attain upon principle, as an outrage upon society. But let us," continues he, "refer to the history of all elective monarchies and principalities; is there one in which the elective mode is not worse than the hereditary succession?"

As to debating on which is the worst of the two, is admitting both to be bad; and herein we are agreed. The preference which the abbe has given, is a condemnation of the thing he prefers. Such a mode of reasoning on such a subject is inadmissible, because it finally amounts to an accusation of providence, as if she had left to man no other choice with respect to government, than between two evils, the best of which he admits to be, "*an attain upon principle, and an outrage upon society.*"

Passing over, for the present, all the evils and mischiefs which monarchy has occasioned in the world, nothing can more effectually prove its uselessness in a state of *civil government*, than making it hereditary. Would we make any office hereditary that required wisdom and abilities to fill it? And where wisdom and abilities are not necessary, such an office, whatever it may be, is superfluous or insignificant.

Hereditary succession is a burlesque upon monarchy. It puts it in the most ridiculous light, by presenting it as an office which any child or idiot may fill. It requires some talents to be a common mechanic; but to be a king, requires only the animal figure of man—a sort of breathing automaton. This sort of superstition may last a few years more, but it cannot long resist the awakened reason and interest of man.

As to Mr. Burke, he is a stickler for monarchy, not altogether as a pensioner, if he is one, which I believe, but as a political man. He has taken up a contemptible opinion of mankind, who, in their turn, are taking up the same of him. He considers them as a herd of beings that must be governed by fraud, effigy, and show; and an idol would be as good a figure of monarchy with him, as a man. I will, however, do him the justice to say, that, with respect to America, he has been very complimentary. He always contended, at least in my hearing, that the people of America were more enlightened than those of England, or of any country in Europe; and that therefore the imposition of show was not necessary in their governments.

Though the comparison between hereditary and elective monarchy, which the abbe had made, is unnecessary to the case, because the representative system rejects both ; yet were I to make the comparison, I should decide contrary to what he has done.

The civil wars which have originated from contested hereditary claims, are more numerous, and have been more dreadful, and of longer continuance, than those which have been occasioned by election. All the civil wars in France arose from the hereditary system ; they were either produced by hereditary claims, or by the imperfection of the hereditary form, which admits of regencies, or monarchy at nurse. With respect to England, its history is full of the same misfortunes. The contests for succession between the houses of York and Lancaster, lasted a whole century ; and others of a similar nature have renewed themselves since that period. Those of 1715 and 1745, were of the same kind. The succession-war for the crown of Spain embroiled almost half of Europe. The disturbances in Holland are generated from the hereditaryship of the stadtholder. A government calling itself free, with an hereditary office, is like a thorn in the flesh, that produces a fermentation which endeavors to discharge it.

But I might go further, and place also foreign wars, of whatever kind, to the same cause. It is by adding the evil of hereditary succession to that of monarchy, that a permanent family interest is created, whose constant objects are dominion and revenue. Poland, though an elective monarchy, has had fewer wars than those which are hereditary ; and it is the only government that has made a voluntary essay, though but a small one, to reform the condition of the country.

Having thus glanced at a few of the defects of the old, or hereditary systems of government, let us compare it with the new or representative system.

The representative system takes society and civilization for its basis ; nature, reason, and experience for its guide.

Experience, in all ages, and in all countries, has demonstrated, that it is impossible to control nature in her distribution of mental powers. She gives them as she pleases. Whatever is the rule by which she, apparently to us, scatters them among mankind. that rule remains a secret to man. It would be as ridiculous to attempt to fix the hereditaryship of human beauty, as of wisdom.

Whatever wisdom constitutently is, it is like a seedless plant ; it may be reared when it appears ; but it cannot be voluntarily produced. There is always a sufficiency somewhere in the general mass of society for all purposes ; but with respect to the parts of society, it is continually changing its place. It rises in one to-day, in another to-morrow, and has most probably visited in rotation every family of the earth, and again withdrawn.

As this is the order of nature, the order of government must necessarily follow it, or government will, as we see it does, degenerate into ignorance. The hereditary system, therefore, is as repugnant to human wisdom, as to human rights ; and is as absurd as it is unjust.

As the republic of letters brings forward the best literary productions, by giving to genius a fair and universal chance ; so the representative system of government is calculated to produce the wisest laws, by collecting wisdom where it can be found. I smile to myself when I contemplate the ridiculous insignificance into which literature and all the sciences would sink, were they made hereditary ; and I carry the same idea into governments. An hereditary governor is as inconsistent as an hereditary author. I know not whether Homer or Euclid had sons ; but I will venture an opinion, that if they had, and had left their works unfinished, those sons could not have completed them.

Do we need a stronger evidence of the absurdity of hereditary government, than is seen in descendants of those men, in any line of life, who once were famous ? Is there scarcely an instance in which there is not a total reverse of the character ? It appears as if the tide of mental faculties flowed as far as it could in certain channels, and then forsook its course, and arose in others. How irrational then is the hereditary system which establishes channels of power, in company with which wisdom refuses to flow ! By continuing this absurdity, man is in perpetual contradiction with himself ; he accepts, for a king, or a chief magistrate, or a legislator, a person whom he would not elect for a constable.

It appears to general observation, that revolutions create genius and talents ; but those events do no more than bring them forward. There exists in man, a mass of sense lying in a dormant state, and which, unless something excites it to action, will descend with him, in that condition, to the grave. As it is to the advantage of society that the whole of its faculties should be em-

ployed, the construction of government ought to be such as to bring forward, by a quiet and regular operation, all that extent of capacity which never fails to appear in revolutions.

This cannot take place in the insipid state of hereditary government, not only because it prevents, but because it operates to benumb. When the mind of a nation is bowed down by any political superstition in its government, such as hereditary succession is, it loses a considerable portion of its powers on all other subjects and objects. Hereditary succession requires the same obedience to ignorance, as to wisdom; and when once the mind can bring itself to pay this indiscriminate reverence, it descends below the statute of mental manhood. It is fit to be great only in little things. It acts a treachery upon itself, and suffocates the sensations that urge to detection.

Though the ancient governments present to us a miserable picture of the condition of man, there is one which above all others exempts itself from the general description. I mean the democracy of the Athenians. We see more to admire and less to condemn, in that great, extraordinary people, than in any thing which history affords.

Mr. Burke is so little acquainted with constituent principles of government, that he confounds democracy and representation together. Representation was a thing unknown in the ancient democracies. In those the mass of the people met and enacted laws (grammatically speaking) in the first person. Simple democracy was no other than the common hall of the ancients. It signifies the *form*, as well as the public principle of the government. As these democracies increased in population, and the territory extended, the simple democratical form became unwieldy and impracticable; and as the system of representation was not known, the consequence was, they either degenerated convulsively into monarchies, or became absorbed into such as then existed. Had the system of representation been then understood, as it now is, there is no reason to believe that those forms of government, now called monarchical or aristocratical, would ever have taken place. It was the want of some method to consolidate the parts of society, after it became too populous, and too extensive for the simple democratical form, and also the lax and solitary condition of shepherds and herdsmen in other parts of the world, that

afforded opportunities to those unnatural modes of government to begin.

As it is necessary to clear away the rubbish of errors, into which the subject of government has been thrown, I shall proceed to remark on some others.

It has always been the political craft of courtiers and court governments, to abuse something which they called republicanism ; but what republicanism was, or is, they never attempt to explain. Let us examine a little into this case.

The only forms of government are, the democratical, the aristocratical, the monarchical, and what is now called the representative.

What is called a *republic*, is not any particular form of government. It is wholly characteristical of the purport, matter, or object for which government ought to be instituted, and on which it is to be employed, *res-publica*, the public affairs, or the public good ; or, literally translated, the *public thing*. It is a word of a good original, referring to what ought to be the character and business of government ; and in this sense it is naturally opposed to the word *monarchy*, which has a base original signification. It means arbitrary power in an individual person ; in the exercise of which, *himself*, and not the *res-publica*, is the object.

Every government that does not act on the principle of a republic, or, in other words, that does not make the *res-publica* its whole and sole object, is not a good government. Republican government is no other than government established and conducted for the interest of the public, as well individually as collectively. It is not necessarily connected with any particular form, but it most naturally associates with the representative form, as being best calculated to secure the end for which a nation is at the expense of supporting it.

Various forms of government have affected to style themselves republics. Poland calls itself a republic, but is in fact an hereditary aristocracy, with what is called an elective monarchy. Holland calls itself a republic, which is chiefly aristocratical, with an hereditary stadtholdership. But the government of America, which is wholly on the system of representation, is the only real republic in character and practice, that now exists. Its government has no other object than the public business of the nation. and therefore it is properly a republic ; and the Americans have

taken care that *this*, and no other, shall be the object of their government, by their rejecting every thing hereditary, and establishing government on the system of representation only.

Those who have said that a republic is not a *form* of government calculated for countries of great extent, mistook, in the first place, the *business* of a government, for a *form* of government; for the *res-publica* equally appertains to every extent of territory and population. And, in the second place, if they meant any thing with respect to *form*, it was the simple democratical form, such as was the mode of government in the ancient democracies, in which there was no representation. The case, therefore, is not that a republic cannot be extensive, but that it cannot be extensive on the simple democratic form; and the question naturally presents itself, *What is the best form of government for conducting the RES-PUBLICA or PUBLIC BUSINESS of a nation, after it becomes too extensive and populous for the simple democratical form?*

It cannot be monarchy, because monarchy is subject to an objection of the same amount to which the democratical form was subject.

It is possible that an individual may lay down a system of principles, on which government shall be constitutionally established to any extent of territory. This is no more than an operation of the mind acting by its own powers. But the practice upon those principles, as applying to the various and numerous circumstances of a nation, its agriculture, manufactures, trade, commerce, &c. require a knowledge, of a different kind, and which can be had only from the various parts of society. It is an assemblage of practical knowledge, which no one individual can possess; and therefore the monarchical form is as much limited, in useful practice, from the incompetency of knowledge, as was the democratical form, from the multiplicity of population. The one degenerates, by extension, into confusion; the other into ignorance and incapacity, of which all the great monarchies are an evidence. The monarchical form, therefore, could not be a substitute for the democratical, because it has equal inconveniences.

Much less could it when made hereditary. This is the most effectual of all forms to preclude knowledge. Neither could the high democratical mind have voluntarily yielded itself to be governed by children and idiots, and all the motley insignificance of

character, which attends such a mere animal system, the disgrace and the reproach of reason and of man.

As to the aristocratical form, it has the same vices and defects with the monarchical, except that the chance of abilities is better from the proportion of numbers, but there is still no security for the right use and application of them.*

Referring, then, to the original simple democracy, it affords the true data from which government on a large scale can begin. It is incapable of extension, not from its principle, but from the inconvenience of its form; and monarchy and aristocracy from their incapacity. Retaining, then, democracy as the ground, and rejecting the corrupt systems of monarchy and aristocracy, the representative system naturally presents itself; remedying at once the defects of the simple democracy as to form, and the incapacity of the other two with regard to knowledge.

Simple democracy was society governing itself without the use of secondary means. By ingrafting representation upon democracy, we arrive at a system of government capable of embracing and confederating all the various interests and every extent of territory and population; and that also with advantages as much superior to hereditary government, as the republic of letters is to hereditary literature.

It is on this system that the American government was founded. It is representation ingrafted upon democracy. It has settled the form by a scale parallel in all cases to the extent of the principle. What Athens was in miniature, America will be in magnitude. The one was the wonder of the ancient world—the other is becoming the admiration and model of the present. It is the easiest of all the forms of government to be understood, and the most eligible in practice; and excludes at once the ignorance and insecurity of the hereditary mode, and the inconvenience of the simple democracy.

It is impossible to conceive a system of government capable of acting over such an extent of territory, and such a circle of interests, as is produced by the operation of representation. France, great and populous as it is, is but a spot in the capaciousness of the system. It adapts itself to all possible cases. It is prefera-

* For a character of aristocracy, the reader is referred to *Rights of Man*, part i. p. 84. et seq.

ble to simple democracy even in small territories. Athens, by representation, would have surpassed her own democracy.

That which is called government, or rather that which we ought to conceive government to be, is no more than some common centre, in which all the parts of society unite. This cannot be established by any method so conducive to the various interests of the community, as by the representative system. It concentrates the knowledge necessary to the interests of the parts, and of the whole. It places government in a state of constant maturity. It is, as has already been observed, never young, never old. It is subject neither to nonage nor dotage. It is never in the cradle nor on crutches. It admits not of a separation between knowledge and power, and is superior, as government ought always to be, to all the accidents of individual man, and is therefore superior to what is called monarchy.

A nation is not a body, the figure of which is to be represented by the human body; but is like a body contained within a circle, having a common centre, in which every radius meets; and that centre is formed by representation. To connect representation with what is called monarchy, is eccentric government. Representation is of itself the delegated monarchy of a nation, and cannot debase itself by dividing it with another.

Mr. Burke has two or three times in his parliamentary speeches, and in his publications, made use of a jingle of words that conveyed no ideas. Speaking of government, he says, "It is better to have monarchy for its basis, and republicanism for its corrective, than republicanism for its basis, and monarchy for its corrective." If he means that it is better to correct folly with wisdom, than wisdom with folly, I will no otherwise contend with him, than to say, it would be much better to reject the folly altogether.

But what is this thing which Mr. Burke calls monarchy? Will he explain it: all mankind can understand what representation is; and that it must necessarily include a variety of knowledge and talents. But what security is there for the same qualities on the part of monarchy? Or, when this monarchy is a child, where then is the wisdom? What does it know about government? Who then is the monarch? or where is the monarchy? If it is to be performed by regency, it proves it to be a farce. A regency is a mock species of republic, and the whole of monarchy deserves no better appellation. It is a thing as various as imagination can

paint. It has none of the stable character that government ought to possess. Every succession is a revolution, and every regency a counter-revolution. The whole of it is a scene of perpetual court cabal and intrigue, of which Mr. Burke is himself an instance.

Whether I have too little sense to see, or too much to be imposed upon : whether I have too much or too little pride, or of any thing else, I leave out of the question ; but certain it is, that what is called monarchy, always appears to me a silly, contemptible thing. I compare it to something kept behind a curtain, about which there is a great deal of bustle and fuss, and a wonderful air of seeming solemnity ; but when, by any accident, the curtain happens to be open and the company see what it is, they burst into laughter.

In the representative system of government, nothing like this can happen. Like the nation itself, it possesses a perpetual stamina, as well of body as of mind, and presents itself on the open theatre of the world in a fair and manly manner. Whatever are its excellencies or its defects, they are visible to all. It exists not by fraud and mystery ; it deals not in cant and sophistry ; but inspires a language, that, passing from heart to heart, is felt and understood.

We must shut our eyes against reason, we must basely degrade our understanding, not to see the folly of what is called monarchy. Nature is orderly in all her works ; but this is a mode of government that counteracts nature. It turns the progress of the human faculties upside down. It subjects age to be governed by children, and wisdom by folly.

On the contrary, the representative system is always parallel with the order and immutable laws of nature, and meets the reason of man in every part. For example :

In the American federal government, more power is delegated to the president of the United States, than to any other individual member of congress. He cannot, therefore, be elected to this office under the age of thirty-five years. By this time the judgment of man becomes matured, and he has lived long enough to become acquainted with men and things, and the country with him. But on the monarchical plan (exclusive of the numerous chances there are against every man born into the world, of drawing a prize in the lottery of human faculties,) the next in

succession, whatever he may be, is put at the head of a nation and of a government, at the age of eighteen years. Does this appear like an act of wisdom? Is it consistent with the proper dignity and the manly character of a nation? Where is the propriety of calling such a lad the father of the people?—In all other cases, a person is a minor until the age of twenty-one years. Before this period he is not trusted with the management of an acre of land, or with the heritable property of a flock of sheep, or an herd of swine; but wonderful to tell! he may at the age of eighteen years, be trusted with a nation.

That monarchy is all a bubble, a mere court artifice to procure money, is evident (at least to me,) in every character in which it can be viewed. It would be almost impossible, on the rational system of representative government, to make out a bill of expenses to such an enormous amount as this deception admits. Government is not of itself a very chargeable institution. The whole expense of the federal government of America, founded, as I have already said, on the system of representation, and extending over a country nearly ten times as large as England, is but six hundred thousand dollars, or one hundred and thirty thousand pounds sterling.

I presume that no man in his sober senses will compare the character of any of the kings of Europe, with that of general Washington. Yet, in France, and also in England, the expense of the civil list only, for the support of one man, is eight times greater than the whole expense of the federal government of America. To assign a reason for this appears almost impossible. The generality of people in America, especially the poor, are more able to pay taxes, than the generality of people either in France or England.

But the case is, that the representative system diffuses such a body of knowledge throughout the nation, on the subject of government, as to explode ignorance and preclude imposition. The craft of courts cannot be acted on that ground. There is no place for mystery; no where for it to begin. Those who are not in the representation, know as much of the nature of business as those who are. An affectation of mysterious importance would there be scouted. Nations can have no secrets; and the secrets of courts, like those of individuals, are always their defects.

In the representative system, the reason for every thing must publicly appear. Every man is a proprietor in government, and considers it a necessary part of his business to understand. It concerns his interest because it affects his property. He examines the cost, and compares it with the advantages ; and above all, he does not adopt the slavish custom of following what in other governments are called *leaders*.

It can only be by blinding the understanding of man, and making him believe that government is some wonderful mysterious thing, that excessive revenues are obtained. Monarchy is well calculated to ensure this end. It is the popery of government ; a thing kept up to amuse the ignorant, and quiet them into paying taxes.

The government of a free country, properly speaking, is not in the persons, but in the laws. The enacting of those requires no great expense ; and when they are administered. the whole of civil government is performed—the rest is all court contrivance



CHAPTER IV.

ON CONSTITUTIONS.

THAT men mean distinct and separate things when they talk of constitutions and of governments, is evident ; or, why are those terms distinctly and separately used ? A constitution is not the act of a government, but of a people constituting a government ; and government without a constitution, is power without a right.

All power exercised over a nation must have some beginning. It must be either delegated, or assumed. There are no other sources. All delegated power is trust, and all assumed power is usurpation. Time does not alter the nature and quality of either.

In viewing this subject, the case and circumstances of America present themselves as in the beginning of a world ; and our inquiry into the origin of government is shortened, by referring to

the facts that have arisen in our day. We have no occasion to roam for information into the obscure field of antiquity, nor hazard ourselves upon conjecture. We are brought at once to the point of seeing government begin, as if we had lived in the beginning of time. The real volume, not of history, but of facts, is directly before us, unmutilated by contrivance, or the errors of tradition.

I will here concisely state the commencement of the American constitutions ; by which the difference between constitutions and governments will sufficiently appear.

It may not be improper to remind the reader, that the United States of America consist of thirteen states, each of which established a government for itself, after the declaration of independence, of the fourth of July 1776. Each state acted independently of the rest, in forming its government ; but the same general principle pervades the whole. When the several state governments were formed, they proceeded to form the federal government, that acts over the whole in all matters which concern the interest of the whole, or which relate to the intercourse of the several states with each other, or with foreign nations. I will begin with giving an instance from one of the state governments (that of Pennsylvania) and then proceed to the federal government.

The state of Pennsylvania, though nearly of the same extent of territory with England, was then divided into twelve counties. Each of those counties had elected a committee at the commencement of the dispute with the English government ; and as the city of Philadelphia, which also had its committee, was the most central for intelligence, it became the centre of communication to the several county committees. When it became necessary to proceed to the formation of a government, the committee of Philadelphia proposed a conference of all the county committees, to be held in that city, and which met the latter end of July, 1776.

Though these committees had been elected by the people, they were not elected expressly for the purpose, nor invested with the authority of forming a constitution : and as they could not, consistently with the American idea of rights, assume such a power, they could only confer upon the matter, and put it into a train of operation. The conferees, therefore did no more than state the case and recommend to the several counties to elect six repre-

sentatives for each county, to meet in convention at Philadelphia, with powers to form a constitution and propose it for public consideration.

This convention, of which Benjamin Franklin was president having met and deliberated, and agreed upon a constitution, they next ordered it to be published, not as a thing established, but for the consideration of the whole people, their approbation or rejection, and then adjourned to a stated time. When the time of adjournment was expired, the convention re-assembled; and as the general opinion of the people in approbation of it was then known, the constitution was signed, sealed, and proclaimed on the *authority of the people*, and the original instrument deposited as a public record. The convention then appointed a day for the general election of the representatives who were to compose the government, and the time it should commence; and having done this, they dissolved, and returned to their several homes and occupations.

In this constitution were laid down, first, a declaration of rights. Then followed the form which the government should have, and the powers it should possess—the authority of courts of judicature and of juries—the manner in which elections should be conducted, and the proportion of representatives to the number of electors—the time which each succeeding assembly should continue, which was one year—the mode of levying, and of accounting for the expenditure, of public money—of appointing public officers, &c.

No article of this constitution could be altered or infringed at the discretion of the government that was to ensue. It was to that government a law. But as it would have been unwise to preclude the benefit of experience, and in order also to prevent the accumulation of errors, if any should be found, and to preserve an unison of government with the circumstances of the state at all times, the constitution provided, that, at the expiration of every seven years, a convention should be elected; for the express purpose of revising the constitution, and making alterations, additions, or abolitions therein, if any such should be found necessary.

Here we see a regular process—a government issuing out of a constitution, formed by the people in their original character; and that constitution, serving, not only as an authority, but as a law of

control to the government. It was the political bible of the state. Scarcely a family was without it. Every member of the government had a copy ; and nothing was more common, when any debate arose on the principle of a bill, or on the extent of any species of authority, than for the members to take the printed constitution out of their pocket, and read the chapter with which such matter in debate was connected.

Having thus given an instance from one of the states, I will show the proceedings by which the federal constitution of the United States arose and was formed.

Congress, at its two first meetings, in September 1774, and May 1775, was nothing more than a deputation from the legislatures of the several provinces, afterwards states ; and had no other authority than what arose from common consent, and the necessity of its acting as a public body. In every thing which related to the internal affairs of America, congress went no further than to issue recommendations, to the several provincial assemblies, who at discretion adopted them or not. Nothing on the part of congress was compulsive ; yet, in this situation, it was more faithfully and affectionately obeyed, than was any government in Europe. This instance, like that of the national assembly of France, sufficiently shows, that the strength of government does not consist in any thing *within* itself, but in the attachment of a nation, and the interest which the people feel in supporting it. When this is lost, government is but a child in power ; and though, like the old government of France, it may harass individuals for a while, it but facilitates its own fall.

After the declaration of independence, it became consistent with the principle on which representative government is founded, that the authority of congress should be defined and established. Whether that authority should be more or less than congress then discretionately exercised, was not then the question. It was merely the rectitude of the measure.

For this purpose the act, called the act of confederation (which was a sort of imperfect federal constitution) was proposed, and, after long deliberation, was concluded in the year 1781. It was not the act of congress, because it is repugnant to the principles of representative government that a body should give power to itself. Congress first informed the several states of the powers which it conceived were necessary to be invested in the union, to

enable it to perform the duties and services required from it ; and the states severally agreed with each other, and concentrated in congress those powers.

It may not be improper to observe, that in both those instances (the one of Pennsylvania, and the other of the United States) there is no such thing as the idea of a compact between the people on one side, and the government on the other. The compact was that of the people with each other, to produce and constitute a government. To suppose that any government can be a party in a compact with the whole people, is to suppose it to have existence before it can have a right to exist. The only instance in which a compact can take place between the people and those who exercise the government, is, that the people shall pay them, while they choose to employ them.

Government is not a trade which any man or body of men has a right to set up and exercise for his own emolument, but is altogether a trust, in right of those by whom that trust is delegated, and by whom it is always resumable. It has of itself no rights ; they are altogether duties.

Having thus given two instances of the original formation of a constitution, I will show the manner in which both have been changed since their first establishment.

The powers vested in the governments of the several states, by the state constitutions, were found, upon experience, to be too great ; and those vested in the federal government, by the act of confederation, too little. The defect was not in the principle, but in the distribution of power.

Numerous publications, in pamphlets and in the newspapers, appeared on the propriety and necessity of new-modelling the federal government. After some time of public discussion, carried on through the channel of the press, and in conversations, the state of Virginia, experiencing some inconvenience with respect to commerce, proposed holding a continental conference ; in consequence of which, a deputation from five or six of the state assemblies met at Annapolis in Maryland, in 1786. This meeting, not conceiving itself sufficiently authorized to go into the business of a reform, did no more than state their general opinions of the propriety of the measure, and recommend that a convention of all the states should be held the year following.

This convention met at Philadelphia, in May 1787, of which general Washington was elected president. He was not at that time connected with any of the state governments, or with congress. He delivered up his commission when the war ended, and since then had lived a private citizen.

The convention went deeply into all the subjects; and having, after a variety of debate and investigation, agreed among themselves upon the several parts of a federal constitution, the next question was, the manner of giving it authority and practice.

For this purpose, they did not, like a cabal of courtiers, send for a Dutch stadtholder, or a German elector; but they referred the whole matter to the sense and interest of the country.

They first directed that the proposed constitution should be published. Second, that each state should elect a convention expressly for the purpose of taking it into consideration, and of ratifying or rejecting it; and that as soon as the approbation and ratification of any nine states should be given, that those states should proceed to the election of their proportion of members to the new federal government; and that the operation of it should then begin, and the former federal government cease.

The several states proceeded accordingly to elect their conventions; some of those conventions ratified the constitution by very large majorities, and two or three unanimously. In others, there were much debate and division of opinion. In the Massachusetts convention, which met at Boston, the majority was not above nineteen or twenty, in about three hundred members; but such is the nature of representative government, that it quietly decides all matters by majority. After the debate in the Massachusetts convention was closed, and the vote taken, the objecting members rose and declared, "*That though they had argued and voted against it, because certain parts appeared to them in a different light to what they appeared to other members; yet, as the vote had been decided in favor of the constitution as proposed, they should give it the same practical support as if they had voted for it.*"

As soon as nine states had concurred, (and the rest followed in the order their conventions were elected,) the old fabric of the federal government was taken down, and a new one erected, of which general Washington is president. In this place I cannot help remarking, that the character and services of this gentleman

are sufficient to put all those men called kings to shame. While they are receiving from the sweat and labors of mankind, a prodigality of pay, to which neither their abilities nor their services can entitle them, he is rendering every service in his power, and refusing every pecuniary reward. He accepted no pay as commander-in-chief; he accepts none as president of the United States.

After the new federal constitution was established, the state of Pennsylvania, conceiving that some parts of its own constitution required to be altered, elected a convention for that purpose. The proposed alterations were published, and the people concurring therein, they were established.

In forming those constitutions, or in altering them, little or no inconvenience took place. The ordinary course of things was not interrupted, and the advantages have been much. It is always the interest of a far greater number of people in a nation to have things right, than to let them remain wrong; and when public matters are open to debate, and the public judgment free, it will not decide wrong, unless it decides too hastily.

In the two instances of changing the constitutions, the government then in being were not actors either way. Government has no right to make itself a party in any debate respecting the principles or modes of forming, or of changing constitutions. It is not for the benefit of those who exercise the powers of government, that constitutions, and the governments issuing from them, are established. In all those matters, the right of judging and acting are in those who pay, and not in those who receive.

A constitution is the property of a nation, and not of those who exercise the government. All the constitutions of America are declared to be established on the authority of the people. In France, the word nation is used instead of the people; but in both cases, a constitution is a thing antecedent to the government, and always distinct therefrom.

In England, it is not difficult to perceive that every thing has a constitution, except the nation. Every society and association that is established, first agreed upon a number of original articles, digested into form, which are its constitution. It then appointed its officers, whose powers and authorities are described in that constitution, and the government of that society then commenced. Those officers, by whatever name they are called, have no

authority to add to, alter, or abridge the original articles. It is only to the constituting power that this right belongs.

From the want of understanding the difference between a constitution and a government, Dr. Johnson, and all writers of his description, have always bewildered themselves. They could not but perceive, that there must necessarily be a *controlling* power somewhere, and they placed this power in the discretion of the persons exercising the government, instead of placing it in a constitution formed by the nation. When it is in a constitution, it has the nation for its support, and the natural and the political controlling powers are together. The laws which are enacted by governments, control men only as individuals, but the nation, through its constitution, controls the whole government, and has a natural ability so to do. The final controlling power, therefore, and the original constituting power, are one and the same power.

Dr. Johnson could not have advanced such a position in any country where there was a constitution; and he is himself an evidence that no such thing as a constitution exists in England. But it may be put as a question, not improper to be investigated, that if a constitution does not exist, how came the idea of its existence so generally established?

In order to decide this question, it is necessary to consider a constitution in both its cases: 1st, as creating a government and giving it its powers: 2d, as regulating and restraining the powers so given.

If we begin with William of Normandy, we find that the government of England was originally a tyranny, founded on an invasion and conquest of the country. This being admitted, it will then appear that the exertion of the nation, at different periods, to abate that tyranny, and render it less intolerable, has been credited for a constitution.

Magna Charta, as it was called, (it is now like an almanac of the same date,) was no more than compelling the government to renounce a part of its assumptions. It did not create and give powers to government in the manner a constitution does; but was, as far as it went, of the nature of a re-conquest, and not of a constitution; for, could the nation have totally expelled the usurpation, as France has done its despotism, it would then have had a constitution to form.

The history of the Edwards and the Henries, and up to the commencement of the Stuarts, exhibits as many instances of tyranny as could be acted within the limits to which the nation had restricted it. The Stuarts endeavored to pass those limits, and their fate is well known. In all those instances we see nothing of a constitution, but only of restrictions on assumed power.

After this, another William, descended from the same stock, and claiming from the same origin, gained possession ; and of the two evils, James and William, the nation preferred what it thought the least ; since, from the circumstances, it must take one. The act, called the Bill of Rights, comes here into view. What is it but a bargain, which the parts of the government made with each other, to divide power, profit, and privileges ? You shall have so much, and I will have the rest ; and with respect to the nation, it said, for *your share*, you shall have the right of petitioning. This being the case, the bill of rights is more properly a bill of wrongs, and of insult. As to what is called the convention-parliament, it was a thing that made itself, and then made the authority by which it acted. A few persons got together, and called themselves by that name. Several of them had never been elected, and none of them for that purpose.

From the time of William, a species of government arose, issuing out of this coalition bill of rights ; and more so, since the corruption introduced at the Hanover succession, by the agency of Walpole : that can be described by no other name than a despotic legislation. Though the parts may embarrass each other, the whole has no bounds ; and the only right it acknowledges out of itself, is the right of petitioning. Where then is the constitution that either gives or restrains power ?

It is not because a part of the government is elective, that makes it less a despotism, if the persons so elected, possess afterwards, as a parliament, unlimited powers. Election, in this case, becomes separated from representation, and the candidates are candidates for despotism.

I cannot believe that any nation, reasoning on its own rights, would have thought of calling those things a *constitution*, if the cry of constitution had not been set up by the government. It has got into circulation like the words *bore*, and *quiz*, by being chalked up in speeches of parliament, as those words were on windw-

shutters and door posts ; but whatever the constitution may be in other respects, it has undoubtedly been the *most productive machine for taxation that was ever invented*. The taxes in France, under the new constitution, are not quite thirteen shillings per head,* and the taxes in England, under what is called its present constitution, are forty-eight shillings and sixpence per head, men, women, and children, amounting to nearly seventeen millions sterling, besides the expense of collection, which is upwards of a million more.

In a country like England, where the whole of the civil government is executed by the people of every town and county, by means of parish officers, magistrates, quarterly sessions, juries, and assize, without any trouble to what is called government, or any other expense to the revenue than the salary of the judges, it is astonishing how such a mass of taxes can be employed. Not even the internal defence of the country is paid out of the revenue. On all occasions, whether real or contrived, recourse is continually had to new loans and to new taxes. No wonder, then, that a machine of government so advantageous to the advocates of a court, should be so triumphantly extolled ! No wonder that St. James's or St. Stephen's should echo with the continual cry of constitution ! No wonder that the French revolution should be reprobated, and the *res-publica* treated with reproach ! The *red book* of England, like the red book of France, will explain the reason.†

I will now, by way of relaxation, turn a thought or two to Mr. Burke. I ask his pardon for neglecting him so long.

"America," says he, (in his speech on the Canada constitution bill,) "never dreamed of such absurd doctrine as the Rights of Man."

* The whole amount of the assessed taxes of France, for the present year, is three hundred millions of francs, which is twelve millions and a half sterling ; and the incidental taxes are estimated at three millions, making in the whole fifteen millions and a half ; which among twenty-four millions of people, is not quite thirty shillings per head. France has lessened her taxes since the revolution, nearly nine millions sterling annually. Before the revolution, the city of Paris paid a duty of upwards of thirty per cent. on all articles brought into the city. This tax was collected at the city gates. It was taken off on the first of last May, and the gates taken down.

† What was called the *livre rouge*, or the red book, in France, was not exactly similar to the court calendar in England ; but it sufficiently showed how a great part of the taxes were lavished.

Mr. Burke is such a bold presumer, and advances his assertions and premises with such a deficiency of judgment, that, without troubling ourselves about principles of philosophy or politics, the mere logical conclusions they produce, are ridiculous. For instance.

If governments, as Mr. Burke asserts, are not founded on the the rights of *man*, and are founded on *any rights* at all, they consequently must be founded on the rights of *something* that is *not man*. What, then, is that something?

Generally speaking, we know of no other creatures that inhabit the earth than man and beast; and in all cases, where only two things offer themselves, and one must be admitted, a negation proved on any one, amounts to an affirmative on the other; and therefore, Mr. Burke, by proving against the rights of *man*, proves in behalf of the *beast*; and consequently, proves that government is a beast: and as difficult things sometimes explain each other, we now see the origin of keeping wild beasts in the Tower; for they certainly can be of no other use than to show the origin of the government. They are in the place of a constitution. O! John Bull, what honors thou hast lost by not being a wild beast. Thou mightest, on Mr. Burke's system, have been in the Tower for life.

If Mr. Burke's arguments have not weight enough to keep one serious, the fault is less mine than his; and as I am willing to make an apology to the reader for the liberty I have taken, I hope Mr. Burke will also make his for giving the cause.

Having thus paid Mr. Burke the compliment of remembering him, I return to the subject.

From the want of a constitution in England, to restrain and regulate the wild impulse of power, many of the laws are irrational and tyrannical, and the administration of them vague and problematical.

The attention of the government of England (for I rather choose to call it by this name, than the English government) appears, since its political connexion with Germany, to have been so completely engrossed and absorbed by foreign affairs, and the means of raising taxes, that it seems to exist for no other purposes. Domestic concerns are neglected; and, with respect to regular w, there is scarcely such a thing.

Almost every case must now be determined by some precedent, be that precedent good or bad, or whether it properly applies or not; and the practice has become so general, as to suggest a suspicion, that it proceeds from a deeper policy than at first sight appears.

Since the revolution of America, and more so since that of France, this preaching up the doctrine of precedents, drawn from times and circumstances antecedent to those events, has been the studied practice of the English government. The generality of those precedents are founded on principles and opinions the reverse of what they ought to be; and the greater distance of time they are drawn from, the more they are to be suspected. But by associating those precedents with a superstitious reverence for ancient things, as monks show relics and call them holy, the generality of mankind are deceived into the design. Governments now act as if they were afraid to awaken a single reflection in man. They are softly leading him to the sepulchre of precedents, to deaden his faculties and call his attention from the scene of revolutions. They feel that he is arriving at knowledge faster than they wish, and their policy of precedents is the barometer of their fears. This political popery, like the ecclesiastical popery of old, has had its day, and is hastening to its exit. The ragged relic and the antiquated precedent, the monk and the monarch, will moulder together.

Government by precedent, without any regard to the principle of the precedent, is one of the vilest systems that can be set up. In numerous instances, the precedent ought to operate as a warning, and not as an example, and requires to be shunned instead of imitated; but instead of this, precedents are taken in the lump and put at once for constitution and for law.

Either the doctrine of precedent is policy to keep a man in a state of ignorance, or it is a practical confession that wisdom degenerates in governments as governments increase in age, and can only hobble along by the stilts and crutches of precedents. How is it that the same persons who would proudly be thought wiser than their predecessors, appear at the same time only as the ghosts of departed wisdom? How strangely is antiquity treated! To answer some purposes, it is spoken of as the times of darkness and ignorance, and to answer others it is put for the light of the world.

If the doctrine of precedents is to be followed, the expenses of government need not continue the same. Why pay men extravagantly who have but little to do? If every thing that can happen is already in precedent, legislation is at an end, and precedent, like a dictionary, determines every case. Either, therefore, government has arrived at its dotage, and requires to be renovated, or all the occasions for exercising its wisdom have occurred.

We now see all over Europe, and particularly in England, the curious phenomenon of a nation looking one way, and a government the other; the one forward, and the other backward. If governments are to go on by precedent, while nations go on by improvement, they must at last come to a final separation, and the sooner, and the more civilly they determine this point, the better it will be for them.*

Having thus spoken of constitutions generally, as things distinct from actual governments, let us proceed to consider the parts of which a constitution is composed.

Opinions differ more on this subject, than with respect to the whole. That a nation ought to have a constitution, as a rule for the conduct of its government, is a simple question in which all men, not directly courtiers, will agree. It is only on the component parts that questions and opinions multiply.

But this difficulty, like every other, will diminish when put into a train of being rightly understood.

The first thing is, that a nation has a right to establish a constitution.

Whether it exercises this right in the most judicious manner at first, is quite another case. It exercises it agreeably to the judgment it possesses; and by continuing to do so, all errors will at last be exploded.

When this right is established in a nation, there is no fear that

* In England, the improvements in agriculture, useful arts, manufactures, and commerce, have been made in opposition to the genius of its government, which is that of following precedents. It is from the enterprise and industry of the individuals, and their numerous associations, in which, tritely speaking, government is neither pillow nor bolster, that these improvements have proceeded. No man thought about the government, or who was in, or who was out, when he was planning or executing those things: and all he had to hope, with respect to government, was, that it would let him alone. Three or four very silly ministerial newspapers are continually offending against the spirit of national improvement, by ascribing it to a minister. They may with as much truth, ascribe this book to a minister.

it will be employed to its own injury. A nation can have no interest in being wrong.

Though all the constitutions of America are on one general principle, yet no two of them are exactly alike in their component parts, or in the distribution of the powers which they give to the actual governments. Some are more and others less complex.

In forming a constitution, it is first necessary to consider what are the ends for which government is necessary : secondly, what are the best means, and the least expensive, for accomplishing those ends.

Government is nothing more than a national association ; and the object of this association is the good of all, as well individually as collectively. Every man wishes to pursue his occupation, and to enjoy the fruits of his labors, and the produce of his property, in peace and safety, and with the least possible expense. When these things are accomplished, all the objects for which government ought to be established are answered.

It has been customary to consider government under three distinct general heads. The legislative, the executive, and the judicial.

But if we permit our judgment to act unincumbered by the habit of multiplied terms, we can perceive no more than two divisions of power, of which civil government is composed, namely, that of legislating, or enacting laws, and that of executing or administering them. Every thing, therefore, appertaining to civil government, classes itself under one or other of these two divisions.

So far as regards the execution of the laws, that which is called the judicial power, is strictly and properly the executive power of every country. It is that power to which every individual has an appeal, and which causes the laws to be executed ; neither have we any other clear idea with respect to the official execution of the laws. In England, and also in America and France, this power begins with the magistrate, and proceeds up through all the courts of judicature.

I leave to courtiers to explain what is meant by calling monarchy the executive power. It is merely a name in which acts of government are done ; and any other, or none at all, would answer the same purpose. Laws have neither more nor less authority on this account. It must be from the justness of their

principles, and the interest which a nation feels therein, that they derive support ; if they require any other than this, it is a sign that something in the system of government is imperfect. Laws difficult to be executed cannot be generally good.

With respect to the organization of the *legislative power*, different modes have been adopted in different countries. In America it is generally composed of two houses. In France it consists but of one, but in both countries, it is wholly by representation.

The case is, that mankind (from the long tyranny of assumed power) have had so few opportunities of making the necessary trials on modes and principles of government, in order to discover the best, *that government is but now beginning to be known*, and experience is yet wanting to determine many particulars.

The objections against two houses are, first, that there is an inconsistency in any part of a whole legislature, coming to a final determination by vote on any matter, whilst *that matter*, with respect to *that whole*, is yet only in a train of deliberation, and consequently open to new illustrations.

2d, That by taking the vote on each, as a separate body, it always admits of the possibility, and is often the case in practice, that the minority governs the majority, and that, in some instances, to a great degree of inconsistency.

3d, That two houses arbitrarily checking or controlling each other, is inconsistent ; because it cannot be proved, on the principles of just representation, that either should be wiser or better than the other. They may check in the wrong as well as in the right ; and therefore, to give the power where we cannot give the wisdom to use it, nor be assured of its being rightly used, renders the hazard at least equal to the precaution.*

* With respect to the two houses, of which the English parliament is composed, they appear to be effectually influenced into one, and, as a legislature, to have no temper of its own. The minister, whoever he at any time may be, touches it as with an opium wand, and it sleeps obedience.

But if we look at the distinct abilities of the two houses, the difference will appear so great, as to show the inconsistency of placing power where there can be no certainty of the judgment to use it. Wretched as the state of representation is in England, it is manhood compared with what is called the house of lords ; and so little is this nick-named house regarded, that the people scarcely inquire at any time what it is doing. It appears also to be most under influence, and the furthest removed from the general interest of the nation. In the debate on engaging in the Russian and Turkish war, the majority in the house of peers in favor of it was upwards of ninety, when in the other house, which was more than double its numbers, the majority was sixty-three.

The objection against a single house is, that it is always in a condition of committing itself too soon. But it should at the same time be remembered that when there is a constitution which defines the power, and establishes the principles within which a legislature shall act, there is already a more effectual check provided, and more powerfully operating, than any other check can be. For example,

Were a bill to be brought into any of the American legislatures, similar to that which was passed into an act by the English parliament, at the commencement of the reign of George I. to extend the duration of the assemblies to a longer period than they now sit, the check is in the constitution, which in effect says, *thus far shalt thou go and no further.*

But in order to remove the objection against a single house, (that of acting with too quick an impulse) and at the same time to avoid the inconsistencies, in some cases absurdities, arising from the two houses, the following method has been proposed as an improvement on both.

1st, To have but one representation.

2d, To divide that representation, by lot, into two or three parts.

3d, That every proposed bill shall first be debated in those parts, by succession, that they may become hearers of each other, but without taking any vote. After which the whole representation to assemble, for a general debate and determination, by vote.

To this proposed improvement has been added another, for the purpose of keeping the representation in a state of constant renovation; which is, that one third of the representation of each country shall go out at the expiration of one year, and the number be replaced by new elections. Another third at the expiration of the second year, replaced in like manner, and every third year to be a general election.*

The proceedings on Mr. Fox's bill, respecting the rights of juries, merits also to be noticed. The persons called the peers, were not the objects of that bill. They are already in possession of more privileges than that bill gave to others. They are their own jury, and if any one of that house were prosecuted for a libel, he would not suffer, even upon conviction, for the first offence. Such inequality in laws ought not to exist in any country. The French constitution says, *that the law is the same to every individual, whether to protect or to punish. All are equal in its sight.*

* As to the state of representation in England, it is too absurd to be reasoned upon. Almost all the represented parts are decreasing in population, and the unrepresented parts are increasing. A general convention of the nation is necessary to take the whole state of its government into consideration.

But in whatever manner the separate parts of a constitution may be arranged, there is one general principle that distinguishes freedom from slavery, which is, that all *hereditary government over a people is to them a species of slavery, and representative government is freedom.*

Considering government in the only light in which it should be considered, that of a NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, it ought to be so constructed as not to be disordered by any accident happening among the parts ; and therefore, no extraordinary power, capable of producing such an effect, should be lodged in the hands of any individual. The death, sickness, absence, or defection of any one individual in a government, ought to be a matter of no more consequence, with respect to the nation, than if the same circumstance had taken place in a member of the English parliament, or the French national assembly.

Scarcely any thing presents a more degrading character of national greatness, than its being thrown into confusion by any thing happening to, or acted by an individual ; and the ridiculousness of the scene is often increased by the natural insignificance of the person by whom it is occasioned. Were a government so constructed, that it could not go on unless a goose or a gander were present in the senate, the difficulties would be just as great and as real on the flight or sickness of the goose or the gander, as if they were called a king. We laugh at individuals for the silly difficulties they make to themselves, without perceiving that the greatest of all ridiculous things are acted in governments.*

All the constitutions of America are on a plan that excludes the childish embarrassments which occur in monarchical countries. No suspension of government can there take place for a moment,

* It is related, that in the canton of Berne, in Switzerland, it had been customary, from time immemorial, to keep a bear at the public expense, and the people had been taught to believe, that if they had not a bear, they should all be undone. It happened some years ago, that the bear, then in being, was taken sick, and died too suddenly to have his place immediately supplied with another. During the interregnum the people discovered, that the corn grew and the vintage flourished, and the sun and moon continued to rise and set, and every thing went on the same as before, and, taking courage from these circumstances, they resolved not to keep any more bears: for, said they "a bear is a very voracious, expensive animal, and we were obliged to pull out his claws, lest he should hurt the citizens."

The story of the bear of Berne was related in some of the French newspapers, at the time of the flight of Louis XVI. and the application of it to monarchy could not be mistaken in France ; but it seems, that the aristocracy of Berne applied it to themselves, and have since prohibited the reading of French newspapers.

from any circumstance whatever. The system of representation provides for every thing, and is the only system in which nations and governments can always appear in their proper character.

As extraordinary power ought not to be lodged in the hands of any individual, so ought there to be no appropriations of public money to any person beyond what his services in a state may be worth. It signifies not whether a man be called a president, a king, an emperor, a senator, or by any other name, which propriety or folly may devise, or arrogance assume ; it is only a certain service he can perform in the state ; and the service of any such individual in the routine of office, whether such office be called monarchical, presidential, senatorial, or by any other name or title, can never exceed the value of ten thousand pounds a-year. All the great services that are done in the world are performed by volunteer characters, who accept no pay for them ; but the routine of office is always regulated to such a general standard of abilities as to be within the compass of numbers in every country to perform, and therefore cannot merit very extraordinary recompense. *Government, says Swift, is a plain thing, and fitted to the capacity of many heads.*

It is inhuman to talk of a million sterling a-year, paid out of the public taxes of any country, for the support of any individual, whilst thousands, who are forced to contribute thereto, are pining with want, and struggling with misery. Government does not consist in a contrast between prisons and palaces, between poverty and pomp ; it is not instituted to rob the needy of his mite, and increase the wretchedness of the wretched.—But of this part of the subject I shall speak hereafter, and confine myself at present to political observations.

When extraordinary power and extraordinary pay are allotted to any individual in a government, he becomes the centre, round which every kind of corruption generates and forms. Give to any man a million a year, and add thereto the power of creating and disposing of places, at the expense of a country, and the liberties of that country are no longer secure. What is called the splendor of a throne, is no other than the corruption of the state. It is made up of a band of parasites, living in luxurious indolence, out of the public taxes.

When once such a vicious system is established, it becomes the guard and protection of all inferior abuses. The man who is

in the receipt of a million a-year is the last person to promote a spirit of reform, lest, in the event, it should reach to himself. It is always his interest to defend inferior abuses, as so many out-works to protect the citadel; and in this species of political fortification, all the parts have such a common dependance, that it is never to be expected they will attack each other.*

Monarchy would not have continued so many ages in the world had it not been for the abuses it protects. It is the master fraud, which shelters all others. By admitting a participation of the spoil, it makes itself friends; and when it ceases to do this, it will cease to be the idol of courtiers.

As the principle on which constitutions are now formed, rejects all hereditary pretensions to government, it also rejects all that catalogue of assumptions known by the name of prerogatives.

If there is any government where prerogatives might with apparent safety be intrusted to any individual, it is in the federal government of America. The president of the United States of America is elected only for four years. He is not only responsible in the general sense of the word, but a particular mode is laid down in the constitution for trying him. He cannot be elected under thirty-five years of age; and he must be a native of the country.

In a comparison of these cases with the government of England, the difference when applied to the latter amounts to an absurdity. In England, the person who exercises this prerogative

* It is scarcely possible to touch on any subject, that will not suggest an allusion to some corruption in governments. The simile of "*fortifications*," unfortunately involves with it a circumstance, which is directly in point with the matter above alluded to.

Among the numerous instances of abuse which have been acted or protected by governments, ancient or modern, there is not a greater than that of quarantening a man and his heirs upon the public, to be maintained at its expense.

Humanity dictates a provision for the poor—but by what right, moral or political, does any government assume to say, that the person called the duke of Richmond, shall be maintained by the public? Yet, if common report is true, not a beggar in London can purchase his wretched pittance of coal, without paying towards the civil list of the duke of Richmond. Were the whole produce of this imposition but a shilling a-year, the iniquitous principle would be still the same—but when it amounts, as it is said to do, to not less than twenty thousand pounds per ann. the enormity is too serious to be permitted to remain.—This is one of the effects of monarchy and aristocracy.

In stating this case, I am led by no personal dislike. Though I think it mean in any man to live upon the public; the vice originates in the government; and so general is it become, that whether the parties are in the ministry or in the opposition, it makes no difference; they are sure of the guarantee of each other.

is often a foreigner ; always half a foreigner, and always married to a foreigner. He is never in full natural or political connexion with the country, is not responsible for any thing, and becomes of age at eighteen years ; yet such a person is permitted to form foreign alliances, without even the knowledge of the nation ; and to make war and peace without its consent.

But this is not all. Though such a person cannot dispose of the government, in the manner of a testator, he dictates the marriage connexions, which, in effect, accomplishes a great part of the same end. He cannot directly bequeath half the government to Prussia, but he can form a marriage partnership that will produce the same effect. Under such circumstances, it is happy for England that she is not situated on the continent, or she might, like Holland, fall under the dictatorship of Prussia. Holland, by marriage, is as effectually governed by Prussia, as if the old tyranny of bequeathing the government had been the means.

The presidency in America, (or, as it is sometimes called, the executive,) is the only office from which a foreigner is excluded ; and in England, it is the only one to which he is admitted. A foreigner cannot be a member of parliament, but he may be what is called a king. If there is any reason for excluding foreigners, it ought to be from those offices where most mischief can be acted, and where, by uniting every bias of interest and attachment, the trust is best secured.

But as nations proceed in the great business of forming constitutions, they will examine with more precision into the nature and business of that department which is called the executive. What the legislative and judicial departments are, every one can see ; but with respect to what, in Europe, is called the executive, as distinct from those two, it is either a political superfluity, or a chaos of unknown things.

Some kind of official department, to which reports shall be made from different parts of the nation, or from abroad, to be laid before the national representatives, is all that is necessary ; but there is no consistency in calling this the executive ; neither can it be considered in any other light than as inferior to the legislature. The sovereign authority in any country is the power of making laws, and every thing else is an official department.

Next to the arrangement of the principles and the organization of the several parts of a constitution, is the provision to be made

for the support of the persons to whom the nation shall confide the administration of the constitutional powers.

A nation can have no right to the time and services of any person at his own expense, whom it may choose to employ or intrust in any department whatever ; neither can any reason be given for making provision for the support of any one part of the government and not for the other.

But, admitting that the honor of being intrusted with any part of a government, is to be considered a sufficient reward, it ought to be so to every person alike. If the members of the legislature of any country are to serve at their own expense, that which is called the executive, whether monarchical, or by any other name, ought to serve in like manner. It is inconsistent to pay the one, and accept the service of the other gratis.

In America, every department in the government is decently provided for ; but no one is extravagantly paid. Every member of congress, and of the state assemblies, is allowed a sufficiency for his expenses. Whereas, in England, a most prodigal provision is made for the support of one part of the government, and none for the other ; the consequence of which is, that the one is furnished with the means of corruption, and the other is put into the condition of being corrupted. Less than a fourth part of such expense, applied as it is in America, would remedy a great part of the corruption.

Another reform in the American constitutions is, the exploding all oaths of personality. The oath of allegiance is to the nation only. The putting any individual as a figure for a nation is improper. The happiness of a nation is the first object, and therefore the intention of an oath of allegiance ought not to be obscured by being figuratively taken, to, or in the name of, any person. The oath, called the civic oath, in France, viz. the "*nation, the law, and the king,*" is improper. If taken at all, it ought to be as in America, to the nation only. The law may or may not be good ; but, in this place, it can have no other meaning, than as being conducive to the happiness of the nation, and therefore is included in it. The remainder of the oath is improper, on the ground that all personal oaths ought to be abolished. They are the remains of tyranny on one part, and slavery on the other ; and the name of the Creator ought not to be introduced to witness the degradation of his creation ; or if taken, as is already

mentioned, as figurative of the nation, it is in this place redundant. But whatever apology may be made for oaths at the first establishment of a government, they ought not to be permitted afterwards. If a government requires the support of oaths, it is a sign that it is not worth supporting, and ought not to be supported. Make government what it ought to be, and it will support itself.

To conclude this part of the subject. One of the greatest improvements that has been made for the perpetual security and progress of constitutional liberty, is the provision which the new constitutions make for occasionally revising, altering and amending them.

The principle upon which Mr. Burke formed his political creed, that "*of binding and controlling posterity to the end of time, and renouncing and abdicating the rights of all posterity for ever,*" is now become too detestable to be made a subject of debate; and, therefore, I pass it over with no other notice than exposing it.

Government is but now beginning to be known. Hitherto it has been the mere exercise of power, which forbid all effectual inquiry into rights, and grounded itself wholly on possession. While the enemy of liberty was its judge, the progress of its principles must have been small indeed.

The constitutions of America, and also that of France, have either fixed a period for their revision, or laid down the mode by which improvements shall be made. It is perhaps impossible to establish any thing that combines principles with opinions and practice, which the progress of circumstances, through a length of years, will not in some measure derange, or render inconsistent; and, therefore, to prevent inconveniences accumulating, till they discourage reformatations or provoke revolutions, it is best to regulate them as they occur. The rights of man are the rights of all generations of men, and cannot be monopolized by any. That which is worth following, will be followed for the sake of its worth; and it is in this that its security lies, and not in any conditions with which it may be incumbered. When a man leaves property to his heirs, he does not connect it with an obligation that they shall accept it. Why then should we do otherwise with respect to constitutions?

The best constitution that could now be devised, consistent with the condition of the present moment, may be far short of that excellence which a few years may afford. There is a morn

ing of reason rising upon man, on the subject of government, that has not appeared before. As the barbarism of the present old governments expires, the moral condition of nations, with respect to each other, will be changed. Man will not be brought up with the savage idea of considering his species as enemies, because the accident of birth gave the individuals existence in countries distinguished by different names ; and as constitutions have always some relation to external as well as to domestic circumstances the means of benefiting by every change, foreign or domestic, should be a part of every constitution.

We already see an alteration in the national disposition of England and France towards each other, which, when we look back only a few years, is itself a revolution. Who could have foreseen, or who would have believed, that a French national assembly would ever have been a popular toast in England, or that a friendly alliance of the two nations should become the wish of either ? It shows, that man, were he not corrupted by governments, is naturally the friend of man, and that human nature is not of itself vicious. That spirit of jealousy and ferocity, which the governments of the two countries inspired, and which they rendered subservient to the purpose of taxation, is now yielding to the dictates of reason, interest, and humanity. The trade of courts is beginning to be understood, and the affectation of mystery, with all the artificial sorcery by which they imposed upon mankind, is on the decline. It has received its death wound ; and though it may linger, it will expire.

Government ought to be as much open to improvement as any thing which appertains to man, instead of which it has been monopolized from age to age, by the most ignorant and vicious of the human race. Need we any other proof of their wretched management, than the excess of debt and taxes with which every nation groans, and the quarrels into which they have precipitated the world ?

Just emerging from such a barbarous condition, it is too soon to determine to what extent of improvement government may yet be carried. For what we can foresee, all Europe may form out one great republic, and man be free of the whole.

CHAPTER V.

WAYS AND MEANS OF IMPROVING THE CONDITION OF EUROPE ;
INTERSPERSED WITH MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

In contemplating a subject that embraces with equatorial magnitude the whole region of humanity, it is impossible to confine the pursuit in any one single direction. It takes ground on every character and condition that appertains to man, and blends the individual, the nation, and the world.

From a small spark, kindled in America, a flame has arisen, not to be extinguished. Without consuming, like the *ultimo ratio regum*, it winds its progress from nation to nation, and conquers by a silent operation. Man finds himself changed, he scarcely perceives how. He acquires a knowledge of his rights by attending justly to his interest, and discovers in the event, that the strength and powers of despotism consist wholly in the fear of resisting it, and that, in order "*to be free, it is sufficient that he wills it.*"

Having in all the preceding parts of this work endeavored to establish a system of principles as a basis on which governments ought to be erected, I shall proceed in this, to the ways and means of rendering them into practice. But in order to introduce this part of the subject with more propriety, and stronger effect, some preliminary observations, deducible from, or connected with those principles, are necessary.

Whatever the form or constitution of government may be, it ought to have no other object than the general happiness. When, instead of this, it operates to create and increase wretchedness in any of the parts of society, it is on a wrong system, and reformation is necessary.

Customary language has classed the condition of man under the two descriptions of civilized and uncivilized life. To the one it has ascribed felicity and affluence ; to the other, hardship and want. But, however our imagination may be impressed by painting and comparison, it is nevertheless true, that a great portion of

mankind, in what are called civilized countries, are in a state of poverty and wretchedness, far below the condition of an Indian. I speak not of one country, but of all. It is so in England, it is so all over Europe. Let us inquire into the cause.

It lies not in any natural defect in the principles of civilization, but in preventing those principles having an universal operation ; the consequence of which is, a perpetual system of war and expense, that drains the country and defeats the general felicity of which civilization is capable.

All the European governments (France now excepted,) are constructed, not on the principle of universal civilization, but on the reverse of it. So far as those governments relate to each other, they are in the same condition as we conceive of savage uncivilized life ; they put themselves beyond the law, as well of God as of man, and are, with respect to principle and reciprocal conduct, like so many individuals in a state of nature.

The inhabitants of every country, under the civilization of laws, easily associate together ; but governments being in an uncivilized state, and almost continually at war, they pervert the abundance which civilized life produces, to carry on the uncivilized part to a greater extent. By thus ingrafting the barbarism of government upon the internal civilization of a country, it draws from the latter, and more especially from the poor, a great portion of those earnings which should be applied to their own subsistence and comfort. Apart from all reflections of morality and philosophy, it is a melancholy fact, that more than one fourth of the labor of mankind is annually consumed by this barbarous system.

What has served to continue this evil, is the pecuniary advantage, which all the governments of Europe have found in keeping up this state of uncivilization. It affords to them pretences for power and revenue, for which there would be neither occasion nor apology, if the circle of civilization were rendered complete. Civil government alone, or the government of laws, is not productive of pretences for many taxes ; it operates at home, directly under the eye of the country, and precludes the possibility of much imposition. But when the scene is laid on the uncivilized contention of governments, the field of pretences is enlarged, and the country, being no longer a judge, is open to every imposition which governments please to act.

Not a thirtieth, scarcely a fortieth part of the taxes which are raised in England, are either occasioned by, or applied to the purposes of civil government. It is not difficult to see that the whole which the actual government does in this respect, is to enact laws, and that the country administers and executes them, at its own expense, by means of magistrates, juries, sessions, and assize, over and above the taxes which it pays.

In this view of the case, we have two distinct characters of government; the one, the civil government, or the government of laws, which operates at home; the other, the court or cabinet government, which operates abroad on the rude plan of uncivilized life; the one attended with little charge, the other with boundless extravagance; and so distinct are the two, that if the latter were to sink, as it were by a sudden opening of the earth, and totally disappear, the former would not be deranged. It would still proceed, because it is the common interest of the nation that it should, and all the means are in practice.

Revolutions, then, have for their object, a change in the moral condition of governments, and with this change the burden of public taxes will lessen, and civilization will be left to the enjoyment of that abundance, of which it is now deprived.

In contemplating the whole of this subject, I extend my views into the department of commerce. In all my publications, where the matter would admit, I have been an advocate for commerce, because I am a friend to its effects. It is a pacific system, operating to unite mankind, by rendering nations, as well as individuals, useful to each other. As to mere theoretical reformation, I have never preached it up. The most effectual process is that of improving the condition of man by means of his interest; and it is on this ground that I take my stand.

If commerce were permitted to act to the universal extent it is capable of, it would extirpate the system of war, and produce a revolution in the uncivilized state of governments. The invention of commerce has arisen since those governments began, and is the greatest approach towards universal civilization, that has yet been made by any means not immediately flowing from moral principles.

Whatever has a tendency to promote the civil intercourse of nations, by an exchange of benefits, is a subject as worthy of philosophy as of politics. Commerce is no other than the traffic of

two persons, multiplied on a scale of numbers ; and by the same rule that nature intended the intercourse of two, she intended that of all. For this purpose she has distributed the materials of manufactures and commerce, in various and distant parts of a nation and of the world ; and as they cannot be procured by war so cheaply or so commodiously as by commerce, she has rendered the latter the means of extirpating the former.

As the two are nearly the opposites of each other, consequently, the uncivilized state of European governments is injurious to commerce. Every kind of destruction or embarrassment serves to lessen the quantity, and it matters but little in what part of the commercial world the reduction begins. Like blood, it cannot be taken from any of the parts, without being taken from the whole mass in circulation, and all partake of the loss. When the ability in any nation to buy is destroyed, it equally involves the seller. Could the government of England destroy the commerce of all other nations, she would most effectually ruin her own.

It is possible that a nation may be the carrier for the world, but she cannot be the merchant. She cannot be the seller and the buyer of her own merchandize. The ability to buy must reside out of herself ; and, therefore, the prosperity of any commercial nation is regulated by the prosperity of the rest. If they are poor, she cannot be rich ; and her condition, be it what it may, is an index of the height of the commercial tide in other nations.

That the principles of commerce, and its universal operation may be understood, without understanding the practice, is a position that reason will not deny ; and it is on this ground only that I argue the subject. It is one thing in the counting house, in the world it is another. With respect to its operation, it must necessarily be contemplated as a reciprocal thing, that only one half its powers resides within the nation, and that the whole is as effectually destroyed by destroying the half that resides without, as if the destruction had been committed on that which is within, for neither can act without the other.

When in the last, as well as in the former wars, the commerce of England sunk, it was because the general quantity was lessened every where ; and it now rises because commerce is in a rising state in every nation. If England, at this day, imports and exports more than at any other period, the nation with which she

trades must necessarily do the same ; her imports are their exports, and *vice versa*.

There can be no such thing as a nation flourishing alone in commerce ; she can only participate ; and the destruction of it in any part must necessarily affect all. When, therefore, governments are at war, the attack is made upon the common stock of commerce, and the consequence is the same as if each had attacked his own.

The present increase of commerce is not to be attributed to ministers, or to any political contrivances, but to its own natural operations in consequence of peace. The regular markets had been destroyed, the channels of trade broken up, and the high road of the seas infested with robbers of every nation, and the attention of the world called to other objects. Those interruptions have ceased, and peace has restored the deranged condition of things to their proper order.*

It is worth remarking, that every nation reckons the balance of trade in its own favor ; and therefore something must be irregular in the common ideas upon this subject.

The fact, however, is true, according to what is called a balance ; and it is from this cause that commerce is universally supported. Every nation feels the advantage, or it would abandon the practice : but the deception lies in the mode of making up the accounts, and attributing what are called profits to a wrong cause.

Mr. Pitt has sometimes amused himself, by showing what he called a balance of trade from the custom-house books. This mode of calculation, not only affords no rule that is true, but one that is false.

In the first place, every cargo that departs from the custom-house, appears on the books as an export ; and according to the custom-house balance, the losses at sea, and by foreign failures, are all reckoned on the side of the profit, because they appear as exports.

* In America the increase of commerce is greater in proportion than in England. It is, at this time, at least one half more than at any period prior to the revolution. The greatest number of vessels cleared out of the port of Philadelphia, before the commencement of the war, was between eight and nine hundred. In the year 1788, the number was upwards of twelve hundred. As the state of Pennsylvania is estimated as an eighth part of the United States in population, the whole number of vessels must now be nearly ten thousand.

Second, Because the importation by the smuggling trade does not appear on the custom-house books, to arrange against the exports.

No balance, therefore, as applying to superior advantages, can be drawn from these documents; and if we examine the natural operation of commerce, the idea is fallacious; and if true, would soon be injurious. The great support of commerce consists in the balance being a level of benefits among all nations.

Two merchants of different nations trading together, will both become rich, and each makes the balance in his own favor; consequently, they do not get rich out of each other; and it is the same with respect to the nations in which they reside. The case must be, that each nation must get rich out of its own means, and increase that riches by something which it procures from another in exchange.

If a merchant in England sends an article of English manufacture abroad, which costs him a shilling at home, and imports something which sells for two, he makes a balance of one shilling in his own favor: but this is not gained out of the foreign nation, or the foreign merchant, for he also does the same by the article he receives, and neither has a balance of advantage upon the other. The original value of the two articles in their proper countries were but two shillings; but by changing their places, they acquire a new idea of value, equal to double what they had at first, and that increased value is equally divided.

There is no otherwise a balance on foreign than on domestic commerce. The merchants of London and Newcastle trade on the same principle, as if they resided in different nations, and make their balances in the same manner: yet London does not get rich out of Newcastle, any more than Newcastle out of London: but coals, the merchandize of Newcastle, have an additional value at London, and London merchandize has the same at Newcastle.

Though the principle of all commerce is the same, the domestic, in a national view, is the part the most beneficial; because the whole of the advantages, on both sides, rest within the nation; whereas, in foreign commerce, it is only a participation of one half.

The most unprofitable of all commerce, is that connected with foreign dominion. To a few individuals it may be beneficial, merely because it is commerce; but to the nation it is a loss. The expense of maintaining dominion more than absorbs the profits of any trade. It does not increase the general quantity in the world, but operates to lessen it; and as a greater mass would be afloat by relinquishing dominion, the participation without the expense would be more valuable than a greater quantity with it.

But it is impossible to engross commerce by dominion; and therefore it is still more fallacious. It cannot exist in confined channels, and necessarily breaks out by regular or irregular means that defeat the attempt, and to succeed would be still worse. France, since the revolution, has been more than indifferent as to foreign possessions; and other nations will become the same when they investigate the subject with respect to commerce.

To the expense of dominion is to be added that of navies, and when the amount of the two is subtracted from the profits of commerce, it will appear, that what is called the balance of trade, even admitting it to exist, is not enjoyed by the nation, but absorbed by the government.

The idea of having navies for the protection of commerce, is delusive. It is putting the means of destruction for the means of protection. Commerce needs no other protection than the reciprocal interest which every nation feels in supporting it—it is common stock—it exists by a balance of advantages to all; and the only interruption it meets, is from the present uncivilized state of governments, and which is its common interest to reform.*

Quitting this subject, I now proceed to other matters.—As it is necessary to include England in the prospect of a general reformation, it is proper to inquire into the defects of its government. It is only by each nation reforming its own, that the whole can be

* When I saw Mr. Pitt's mode of estimating the balance of trade, in one of his parliamentary speeches, he appeared to me to know nothing of the nature and interest of commerce; and no man has more wantonly tortured it than himself. During a period of peace, it has been shackled with the calamities of war. Three times has it been thrown into stagnation, and the vessels unmanned by impressing, within less than four years of peace.

improved, and the full benefit of reformation enjoyed. Only partial advantages can flow from partial reforms.

France and England are the only two countries in Europe where a reformation in government could have successfully begun. The one secure by the ocean, and the other by the immensity of its internal strength, could defy the malignancy of foreign despotism. But it is with revolutions as with commerce, the advantages increase by their becoming general, and double to either what each would receive alone.

As a new system is now opening to the view of the world, the European courts are plotting to counteract it. Alliances, contrary to all former systems, are agitating, and a common interest of courts is forming against the common interest of man. The combination draws a line that runs throughout Europe, and presents a case so entirely new, as to exclude all calculations from former circumstances. While despotism warred with despotism, man had no interest in the contest; but in a cause that unites the soldier with the citizen, and nation with nation, the despotism of courts, though it feels the danger, and meditates revenge, is afraid to strike.

No question has arisen within the records of history that pressed with the importance of the present. It is not whether this or that party shall be in or out, or whig or tory, or high or low shall prevail; but whether man shall inherit his rights, and universal civilization take place?—Whether the fruits of his labor shall be enjoyed by himself, or consumed by the profligacy of governments?—Whether robbery shall be banished from courts, and wretchedness from countries?

When, in countries that are called civilized, we see age going to the work-house, and youth to the gallows, something must be wrong in the system of government. It would seem, by the exterior appearance of such countries, that all was happiness; but there lies hidden from the eye of common observation, a mass of wretchedness that has scarcely any other chance, than to expire in poverty or infamy. Its entrance into life is marked with the presage of its fate; and until this is remedied, it is in vain to punish.

Civil government does not exist by executions; but in making that provision for the instruction of youth, and the support of age, as to exclude, as much as possible, profligacy from the one, and

despair from the other. Instead of this, the resources of a country are lavished upon kings, upon courts, upon hirelings, impostors and prostitutes ; and even the poor themselves, with all their wants upon them, are compelled to support the fraud that oppresses them.

Why is it, that scarcely any are executed but the poor ? The fact is a proof, among other things, of a wretchedness in their condition. Bred up without morals, and cast upon the world without a prospect, they are the exposed sacrifice of vice and legal barbarity. The millions that are superfluously wasted upon governments are more than sufficient to reform those evils, and to benefit the condition of every man in a nation, not included in the purview of a court. This I hope to make appear in the progress of this work.

It is the nature of compassion to associate with misfortune. In taking up this subject, I seek no recompense—I fear no consequences. Fortified with that proud integrity, that disdains to triumph or to yield, I will advocate the rights of man.

At an early period, little more than sixteen years of age, raw and adventurous, and heated with the false heroism of a master* who had served in a man of war, I began the carver of my own fortune, and entered on board the privateer *Terrible*, captain *Death*. From this adventure I was happily prevented by the affectionate and moral remonstrance of a good father, who, from his own habits of life, being of the Quaker profession, must have begun to look upon me as lost. But the impression, much as it effected at the time, began to wear away, and I entered afterwards in the privateer, *King of Prussia*, captain *Mendez*, and went in her to sea. Yet, from such a beginning, and with all the inconveniences of early life against me, I am proud to say, that with a perseverance undismayed by difficulties, a disinterestedness that compels respect, I have not only contributed to raise a new empire in the world, founded on a new system of government, but I have arrived at an eminence in political literature, the most difficult of all lines to succeed and excel in, which aristocracy, with all its aids, has not been able to reach or to rival.

Knowing my own heart, and feeling myself, as I now do, superior to all the skirmish of party, the inveteracy of interested or

* Rev. William Knowles, master of the grammar school at Thetford, in Norfolk.

mistaken opponents, I answer not to falsehood or abuse, but proceed to the defects of the English government.*

* Politics and self-interest have been so uniformly connected, that the world, from being so often deceived, has a right to be suspicious of public characters: but with regard to myself, I am perfectly easy on this head. I did not, at my first setting out in public life nearly seventeen years ago, turn my thoughts to subjects of government from motives of interest—and my conduct from that moment to this, proves the fact. I saw an opportunity in which I thought I could do some good, and I followed exactly what my heart dictated. I neither read books, nor studied other people's opinions. I thought for myself. The case was this:

During the suspension of the old governments in America, both before and at the breaking out of hostilities, I was struck with the order and decorum with which every thing was conducted; and impressed with the idea, that a little more than what society naturally performed, was all the government that was necessary, and that monarchy and aristocracy were frauds and impositions upon mankind. On these principles I published the pamphlet *Common Sense*. The success it met with was beyond any thing since the invention of printing. I gave a copy-right to every state in the union, and the demand ran to not less than one hundred thousand copies. I continued the subject in the same manner, under the title of *The Crisis*, till the complete establishment of the revolution.

After the declaration of independence, congress, unanimously and unknown to me, appointed me secretary in the foreign department. This was agreeable to me, because it gave me an opportunity of seeing into the abilities of foreign courts, and their manner of doing business. But a misunderstanding arising between congress and me, respecting one of their commissioners, then in Europe, Mr. Silas Deane, I resigned the office.

When the war ended, I went from Philadelphia to Bordentown, on the east bank of the Delaware, where I have a small place. Congress was at this time at Princeton, fifteen miles distant; and general Washington's head-quarters were at Rocky-Hill, within the neighborhood of congress, for the purpose of resigning his commission (the object for which he accepted it being accomplished) and of retiring to private life. While he was on this business, he wrote me the letter which I here subjoin.

Rocky-Hill, Sept. 10, 1783.

I have learned since I have been at this place, that you are at Bordentown. Whether for the sake of retirement or economy, I know not. Be it for either, for both, or whatever it may, if you will come to this place, and partake with me, I shall be exceedingly happy to see you.

Your presence may remind congress of your past services to this country; and if it is in my power to impress them, command my best exertions with freedom, as they will be rendered cheerfully by one, who entertains a lively sense of the importance of your works, and who, with much pleasure, subscribes himself,

Your sincere friend,

G. WASHINGTON.

During the war, in the latter end of the year 1780, I formed to myself the design of coming over to England, and communicated it to general Greene, who was then in Philadelphia, on his route to the southward, general Washington being then at too great a distance to communicate with immediately. I was strongly impressed with the idea, that if I could get over to England, without being known, and only remain in safety till I could get out a publication, I could open the eyes of the country with respect to the madness and stupidity of its government. I saw that the parties in parliament had pitted themselves as far as they could go, and could make no new impressions on each other. General Greene entered fully into my views, but the affair of Arnold and Andre happening just after, he changed his mind, and, under strong apprehensions for my safety, wrote to me very pressingly from Anna-

I begin with charters and corporations.

It is a perversion of terms to say, that a charter gives rights. It operates by a contrary effect, that of taking rights away. Rights are inherently in all the inhabitants; but charters, by annulling those rights in the majority, leave the right, by exclusion, in the hands of a few. If charters were constructed so as to express in direct terms, "*that every inhabitant, who is not a member of a corporation, shall not exercise the right of voting,*" such charters would in the face be charters, not of rights, but of exclusion. The effect is the same under the form they now stand; and the only persons on whom they operate, are the persons whom they exclude. Those whose rights are guaranteed, by not being taken away, exercise no other rights than as members of the community they are entitled to without a charter; and therefore, all charters have no other than an indirect negative operation. They do not give rights to A, but they make a difference in favor of A, by taking away the rights of B, and consequently are instruments of injustice.

But charters and corporations have a more extensive evil effect than what relates merely to elections. They are sources of endless contention in the places where they exist; and they lessen the common rights of national society. A native of England, under the operation of these charters and corporations, cannot be

polis, in Maryland, to give up the design, which, with some reluctance, I did. Soon after this I accompanied colonel Laurens (son of Mr. Laurens, who was then in the Tower) to France, on business from congress. We landed at l'Orient, and while I remained there, he being gone forward, a circumstance occurred that renewed my former design. An English packet from Falmouth to New-York, with government despatches on board, was brought into l'Orient. That a packet should be taken, is no very extraordinary thing; but that the despatches should be taken with it will scarcely be credited, as they are always slung at the cabin window, in a bag loaded with cannon ball, and ready to be sunk in a moment. The fact, however, is as I have stated it, for the despatches came into my hands, and I read them. The capture, as I was informed, succeeded by the following stratagem:—the captain of the privateer Madame, who spoke English, on coming up with the packet, passed himself for the captain of an English frigate, and invited the captain of the packet on board, which, when done, he sent some of his hands and secured the mail. But be the circumstances of the capture what they may, I speak with certainty as to the despatches. They were sent up to Paris, to count Vergennes, and when colonel Laurens and myself returned to America, we took the originals to congress.

By these despatches I saw further into the stupidity of the English cabinet than I otherwise could have done, and I renewed my former design. But colonel Laurens was so unwilling to return alone, more especially, as among other matters, he had a charge of upwards of two hundred thousand pounds sterling in money, that I gave in to his wishes, and finally gave up my plan. But I am now certain, that if I could have executed it, it would not have been altogether unsuccessful.

said to be an Englishman in the full sense of the word. He is not free of the nation, in the same manner that a Frenchman is free of France, and an American of America. His rights are circumscribed to the town, and, in some cases, to the parish of his birth; and in all other parts, though in his native land, he must undergo a local naturalization by purchase, or he is forbidden or expelled the place. This species of feudality is kept up to aggrandize the corporations to the ruin of the towns; and the effect is visible.

The generality of corporation towns are in a state of solitary decay, and prevented from further ruin only by some circumstances in their situation, such as a navigable river, or a plentiful surrounding country. As population is one of the chief sources of wealth, (for without it land itself has no value,) every thing which operates to prevent it must lessen the value of property; and as corporations have not only this tendency, but directly this effect, they cannot but be injurious. If any policy were to be followed, instead of that of general freedom, to every person to settle where he chose, (as in France or America,) it would be more consistent to give encouragement to new comers, than to preclude their admission by exacting premiums from them.*

The persons most immediately interested in the abolition of corporations, are the inhabitants of the towns where corporations are established. The instances of Manchester, Birmingham, and Sheffield, show, by contrast, the injury which those Gothic institutions are to property and commerce. A few examples may be found, such as that of London, whose natural and commercial advantages, owing to its situation on the Thames, is capable of bearing up against the political evils of a corporation; but in almost all other cases the fatality is too visible to be doubted or denied.

* It is difficult to account for the origin of charter and corporation towns, unless we suppose them to have arisen out of, or having been connected with some species of garrison services. The times in which they began justify this idea. The generality of those towns have been garrisons, and the corporations were charged with the care of the gates of the towns, when no military garrison was present. Their refusing or granting admission to strangers, which has produced the custom of giving, selling, and buying freedom, has more of the nature of garrison authority than civil government. Soldiers are free of all corporations throughout the nation, by the same propriety that every soldier is free of every garrison, and no other persons are. He can follow any employment, with the permission of his officers, in any corporation town throughout the nation.

Though the whole nation is not so directly affected by the depression of property in corporation towns as the inhabitants themselves, it partakes of the consequences. By lessening the value of property, the quantity of national commerce is curtailed. Every man is a customer in proportion to his ability ; and as all parts of a nation trade with each other, whatever affects any of the parts, must necessarily communicate to the whole.

As one of the houses of the English parliament is, in a great measure, made up by elections from these corporations ; and as it is unnatural that a pure stream would flow from a foul fountain, its vices are but a continuation of the vices of its origin. A man of moral honor and good political principles, cannot submit to the mean drudgery and disgraceful arts, by which such elections are carried. To be a successful candidate, he must be destitute of the qualities that constitute a just legislator : and being thus disciplined to corruption by the mode of entering into parliament, it is not to be expected that the representative should be better than the man.

Mr. Burke, in speaking of the English representation has advanced as bold a challenge as ever was given in the days of chivalry. "Our representation," says he, "has been found *perfectly adequate to all the purposes* for which a representation of the people can be desired or devised. I defy," continues he, "the enemies of our constitution to show the contrary." This declaration from a man, who has been in constant opposition to all the measures of parliament the whole of his political life, a year or two excepted, is most extraordinary, and, comparing him with himself, admits of no other alternative, than that he acted against his judgment as a member, or has declared contrary to it as an author.

But it is not in the representation only that the defects lie, and therefore I proceed in the next place to aristocracy.

What is called the house of peers, is constituted on a ground very similar to that, against which there is a law in other cases. It amounts to a combination of persons in one common interest. No reason can be given, why a house of legislation should be composed entirely of men whose occupation consists in letting landed property, than why it should be composed of those who hire, or of brewers, or bakers, or any other separate class of men.

Mr. Burke calls this house, "*the great ground and pillar of security to the landed interest.*" Let us examine this idea.

What pillar of security does the landed interest require, more than any other interest in the state, or what right has it to a distinct and separate representation from the general interest of a nation? The only use to be made of this power, (and which it has always made,) is to ward off taxes from itself, and throw the burden upon such articles of consumption by which itself would be least affected,

That this has been the consequence (and will always be the consequence of constructing governments on combinations,) is evident, with respect to England, from the history of its taxes.

Notwithstanding taxes have increased and multiplied upon every article of common consumption, the land tax, which more particularly affects this "pillar," has diminished. In 1788, the amount of the land-tax was 1,950,000*l.* which is half a million less than it produced almost a hundred years ago, notwithstanding the rentals are in many instances doubled since that period.

Before the coming of the Hanoverians, the taxes were divided in nearly equal proportions between the land and articles of consumption, the land bearing rather the largest share; but since that era, nearly thirteen millions annually of new taxes have been thrown upon consumption. The consequence of which has been a constant increase in the number and wretchedness of the poor, and in the amount of the poor-rates. Yet here again the burden does not fall in equal proportions on the aristocracy with the rest of the community. Their residences, whether in town or country, are not mixed with the habitations of the poor.—They live apart from distress, and the expense of relieving it. It is in manufacturing towns and laboring villages that those burdens press the heaviest; in many of which it is one class of poor supporting another.

Several of the most heavy and productive taxes are so contrived, as to give an exemption to this pillar, thus standing in its own defence. The tax upon beer brewed for sale does not affect the aristocracy, who brew their own beer free of this duty. It falls only on those who have not conveniency or ability to brew, and who must purchase it in small quantities. But what will

mankind think of the justice of taxation, when they know, that this tax alone, from which the aristocracy are from circumstances exempt, is nearly equal to the whole of the land-tax, being in the year 1788, and it is not less now, 1,666,152*l.* and with its proportion of the taxes on malt and hops, it exceeds it. That a single article thus partially consumed, and that chiefly by the working part, should be subject to a tax equal to that on the whole rental of a nation, is, perhaps, a fact not to be paralleled in the history of revenues.

This is one of the consequences resulting from a house of legislation, composed on the ground of a combination of common interest ; for whatever their separate politics as to parties may be, in this they are united. Whether a combination acts to raise the price of an article for sale, or the rate of wages ; or whether it acts to throw taxes from itself upon another class of the community, the principle and the effect are the same : and if the one be illegal, it will be difficult to show that the other ought to exist.

It is no use to say, that taxes are first proposed in the house of commons ; for as the other house has always a negative, it can always defend itself ; and it would be ridiculous to suppose that its acquiescence in the measures to be proposed were not understood beforehand. Besides which, it has obtained so much influence by borough traffic, and so many of its relations and connexions are distributed on both sides of the commons, as to give it, besides an absolute negative in the house, a preponderancy in the other, in all matters of common concern.

It is difficult to discover what is meant by the *landed interest*, if it does not mean a combination of aristocratical land-holders, opposing their own pecuniary interest to that of the farmer, and every branch of trade, commerce, and manufacture. In all other respects, it is the only interest that needs no partial protection. It enjoys the general protection of the world. Every individual, high or low, is interested in the fruits of the earth ; men, women, and children, of all ages and degrees, will turn out to assist the farmer, rather than a harvest should not be got in ; and they will not act thus by any other property. It is the only one for which the common prayer of mankind is put up, and the only one that can never fail from the want of means. It is the interest, not of the policy, but of the existence of man, and when it ceases, he must cease to be.

No other interest in a nation stands on the same united support. Commerce, manufactures, arts, sciences, and every thing else, compared with this are supported but in parts. Their prosperity or their decay has not the same universal influence. When the valleys laugh and sing, it is not the farmer only, but all creation that rejoices. It is a prosperity that excludes all envy ; and this cannot be said of any thing else.

Why then does Mr. Burke talk of his house of peers, as the pillar of the landed interest ? Were that pillar to sink into the earth, the same landed property would continue, and the same ploughing, sowing, and reaping would go on. The aristocracy are not the farmers who work the land, and raise the produce, but are the mere consumers of the rent ; and when compared with the active world, are the drones, a seraglio of males, who neither collect the honey nor form the hive, but exist only for lazy enjoyment.

Mr. Burke, in his first essay, called aristocracy, "*the corinthian capital of polished society.*" Towards completing the figure, he has now added the *pillar*, but still the base is wanting ; and whenever a nation chooses to act a Sampson, not blind, but bold, down goes the temple of Dagon, the lords and the Philistines.

If a house of legislation is to be composed of men of one class, for the purpose of protecting a distinct interest, all the other interests should have the same. The inequality as well as the burden of taxation, arises from admitting it in one case and not in all. Had there been a house of farmers, there had been no game laws ; or a house of merchants and manufacturers, the taxes had neither been so unequal nor so excessive. It is from the power of taxation being in the hands of those who can throw so great a part of it from their own shoulders, that it has raged without a check.

Men of small or moderate estates, are more injured by the taxes being thrown on articles of consumption, than they are eased by warding it from landed property, for the following reasons :

1st, They consume more of the productive taxable articles, in proportion to their property, than those of large estates.

2d, Their residence is chiefly in towns, and their property in houses ; and the increase of the poor-rates, occasioned by taxes on consumption, is in much greater proportion than the land-tax has been favored. In Birmingham, the poor rates are not less than

seven shillings in the pound. From this, as is already observed, the aristocracy are in a great measure exempt.

These are but a part of the mischiefs flowing from the wretched scheme of an house of peers.

As a combination, it can always throw a considerable portion of taxes from itself ; as an hereditary house, accountable to no body, it resembles a rotten borough, whose consent is to be courted by interest. There are but few of its members, who are not in some mode or other participators, or disposers of the public money. One turns a candle-holder, or a lord in waiting ; another a lord of the bed-chamber, a groom of the stole, or any insignificant nominal office, to which a salary is annexed, paid out of the public taxes, and which avoids the direct appearance of corruption. Such situations are derogatory to the character of a man ; and where they can be submitted to, honor cannot reside.

To all these are to be added the numerous dependants, the long list of the younger branches and distant relations, who are to be provided for at the public expense : in short, were an estimation to be made of the charge of the aristocracy to a nation, it will be found nearly equal to that of supporting the poor. The duke of Richmond alone (and there are cases similar to his) takes away as much for himself, as would maintain two thousand poor and aged persons. Is it, then, any wonder, that under such a system of government, taxes and rates have multiplied to their present extent ?

In stating these matters, I speak an open and disinterested language, dictated by no passion but that of humanity. To me, who have not only refused offers, because I thought them improper, but have declined rewards I might with reputation have accepted, it is no wonder that meanness and imposition appear disgusting. Independence is my happiness, and I view things as they are, without regard to place or person ; my country is the world, and my religion is to do good.

Mr. Burke, in speaking of the aristocratical law of primogeniture, says, "It is the standard law of our landed inheritance ; and which, without question, has a tendency, and I think," continues he, "a happy tendency, to preserve a character of weight and consequence."

Mr. Burke may call this law what he pleases, but humanity and impartial reflection will pronounce it a law of brutal injustice.

Were we not accustomed to the daily practice, and did we only hear of it, as the law of some distant part of the world, we should conclude that the legislators of such countries had not arrived at a state of civilization.

As to preserving a character of *weight and consequence*, the case appears to me directly the reverse. It is an attain upon character; a sort of privateering upon family property. It may have weight among dependant tenants, but it gives none on a scale of national, and much less of universal character. Speaking for myself, my parents were not able to give me a shilling, beyond what they gave me in education; and to do this they distressed themselves; yet I possess more of what is called consequence, in the world, than any one in Mr. Burke's catalogue of aristocrats.

Having thus glanced at some of the defects of the two houses of parliament, I proceed to what is called the crown, upon which I shall be very concise.

It signifies a nominal office of a million sterling a-year, the business of which consists in receiving the money. Whether the person be wise or foolish, sane or insane, a native or a foreigner, matters not. Every ministry acts upon the same idea that Mr. Burke writes, namely, that the people must be hoodwinked, and held in superstitious ignorance by some bugbear or other; and what is called the crown answers this purpose, and therefore it answers all the purposes to be expected from it. This is more than can be said of the other two branches.

The hazard to which this office is exposed in all countries, is not from any thing that can happen to the man, but from what may happen to the nation; the danger of its coming to its senses.

It has been customary to call the crown the executive power, and the custom has continued, though the reason has ceased.

It was called the *executive*, because he whom it signified used formerly to sit in the character of a judge, in administering or executing the laws. The tribunals were then a part of the court. The power, therefore, which is now called the judicial, was what is called the executive; and, consequently, one or the other of the terms is redundant, and one of the offices useless. When we speak of the crown now, it means nothing; it signifies neither a judge nor a general: besides which, it is the laws that govern, and not the man. The old terms are kept up, and give an

appearance of consequence to empty forms : and the only effect they have is that of increasing expenses.

Before I proceed to the means of rendering governments more conducive to the general happiness of mankind, than they are at present, it will not be improper to take a review of the progress of taxation in England.

It is a general idea, that when taxes are once laid on, they are never taken off. However true this may have been of late, it was not always so. Either, therefore, the people of former times were more watchful over government than those of the present, or government was administered with less extravagance.

It is now seven hundred years since the Norman conquest, and the establishment of what is called the crown. Taking this portion of time in seven separate periods of one hundred years each, the amount of the annual taxes, at each period, will be as follows :

Annual amount of taxes levied by William the conqueror, beginning in the year 1066,	-	-	400,000 <i>l</i> .
Annual amount of taxes at one hundred years from the conquest, (1166)	-	-	200,000
Annual amount of taxes at two hundred years from the conquest, (1266)	-	-	150,000
Annual amount of taxes at three hundred years from the conquest, (1366)	-	-	130,000
Annual amount of taxes at four hundred years from the conquest, (1466)	-	-	100,000

These statements, and those which follow, are taken from sir John Sinclair's History of the Revenue ; by which it appears, that taxes continued decreasing for four hundred years, at the expiration of which time they were reduced three-fourths, *viz.* from four hundred thousand pounds to one hundred thousand. The people of England, of the present day, have a traditionary and historical idea of the bravery of their ancestors ; but whatever their virtues or vices might have been, they certainly were a people who would not be imposed upon, and who kept government in awe as to taxation, if not as to principle. Though they were not able to expel the monarchical usurpation, they restricted it to a public economy of taxes.

Let us now review the remaining three hundred years.

Annual amount of taxes at five hundred years from

the conquest, (1566) - - - - 500,000*l*.

Annual amount of taxes at six hundred years from

the conquest, (1666) - - - - 1,800,000*l*.

Annual amount of taxes at the present time, (1791) 17,000,000

The difference between the first four hundred years and the last three, is so astonishing, as to warrant the opinion, that the national character of the English has changed. It would have been impossible to have dragooned the former English into the excess of taxation that now exists; and when it is considered that the pay of the army, the navy, and of all the revenue-officers, is the same now as it was above a hundred years ago, when the taxes were not above a tenth part of what they are at present, it appears impossible to account for the enormous increase and expenditure, on any other ground than extravagance, corruption, and intrigue.*

* Several of the court newspapers have of late made frequent mention of Wat Tyler. That his memory should be traduced by court sycophants, and all those who live on the spoil of a public, is not to be wondered at. He was, however, the means of checking the rage and injustice of taxation in his time, and the nation owed much to his valor. The history is concisely this:—in the time of Richard II. a poll-tax was levied, of one shilling per head upon every person in the nation, of whatever class or condition, on poor as well as rich, above the age of fifteen years. If any favor was shown in the law, it was to the rich rather than the poor; as no person could be charged more than twenty shillings for himself, family and servants, though ever so numerous—while all other families, under the number of twenty, were charged per head. Poll-taxes had always been odious—but this being also oppressive and unjust, it excited, as it naturally must, universal detestation among the poor and middle classes. The person known by the name of Wat Tyler, and whose proper name was Walter, and a tyler by trade, lived at Deptford. The gatherer of the poll-tax, on coming to his house, demanded a tax for one of his daughters, whom Tyler declared was under the age of fifteen. The tax-gatherer insisted in satisfying himself, and began an indecent examination of the girl, which enraging the father, he struck him with a hammer, that brought him to the ground, and was the cause of his death.

This circumstance served to bring the discontents to an issue. The inhabitants of the neighborhood espoused the cause of Tyler, who, in a few days, was joined, according to some historians, by upwards of fifty thousand men, and chosen their chief. With this force he marched to London, to demand an abolition of the tax, and a redress of other grievances. The court, finding itself in a forlorn condition, and unable to make resistance, agreed, with Richard at its head, to hold a conference with Tyler in Smithfield, making many fair professions, courtier-like, of its disposition to redress the oppressions. While Richard and Tyler were in conversation on these matters, each being on horseback, Walworth, then mayor of London, and one of the creatures of the court, watched an opportunity, and, like a cowardly assassin, stabbed Tyler with a dagger—and two or three others falling upon him, he was instantly sacrificed.

Tyler appears to have been an intrepid, disinterested man, with respect to himself. All his proposals made to Richard, were on a more just and public

With the revolution of 1688, and more so since the Hanover succession, came the destructive system of continental intrigues, and the rage for foreign wars and foreign dominion ; systems of such secure mystery, that the expenses admit of no accounts ; a single line stands for millions. To what excess taxation might have extended, had not the French revolution contributed to break up the system, and put an end to pretences, is impossible to say. Viewed as that revolution ought to be, as the fortunate means of lessening the load of taxes of both countries, it is of as much importance to England as to France ; and, if properly improved to all the advantages of which it is capable, and to which it leads, deserves as much celebration in one country as the other.

In pursuing this subject, I shall begin with the matter that first presents itself, that of lessening the burden of taxes ; and shall then add such matters and propositions, respecting the three countries of England, France and America, as the present prospect of things appears to justify ; I mean an alliance of the three, for the purposes that will be mentioned in their proper places.

What has happened may happen again. By the statement before shown, of the progress of taxation, it is seen, that taxes have been lessened to a fourth part of what they had formerly been. Though the present circumstances do not admit of the same reduction, yet they admit of such a beginning, as may accomplish that end in a less time, than in the former case.

The amount of taxes for the year, ending at Michaelmas, 1778, was as follows :

Land tax	-	-	-	-	-	1,950,000 $\frac{1}{2}$
Customs	-	-	-	-	-	3,789,274
Excise (including old and new malt)	-	-	-	-	-	6,751,727
Stamps	-	-	-	-	-	1,278,214
Miscellaneous taxes and incidents	-	-	-	-	-	1,803,755
						<hr/> 15,572,970 $\frac{1}{2}$

Since the year 1788, upwards of one million, new taxes, have been laid on, besides the produce of the lotteries ; and as the

ground, than those which had been made to John by the barons ; and notwithstanding the sycophancy of historians, and men like Mr. Burke, who seek to gloss over a base action of the court by traducing Tyler, his fame will outlive their falsehood. If the barons merited a monument to be erected in Runnymede, Tyler merits one in Smithfield.

taxes have in general been more productive since than before, the amount may be taken, in round numbers, at 17,000,000*l*.

N. B. The expense of collection and the drawbacks, which together amount to nearly two millions, are paid out of the gross amount; and the above is the net sum paid into the exchequer.

The sum of seventeen millions is applied to two different purposes; the one to pay the interest of the national debt, the other to pay the current expenses of each year. About nine millions are appropriated to the former; and the remainder, being nearly eight millions, to the latter. As to the million, said to be applied to the reduction of the debt, it is so much like paying with one hand and taking out with the other, as not to merit much notice.

It happened, fortunately for France, that she possessed national domains for paying off her debt, and thereby lessening her taxes; but as this is not the case in England, her reduction of taxes can only take place by reducing the current expenses, which may now be done to the amount of four or five millions annually, as will hereafter appear. When this is accomplished, it will more than counterbalance the enormous charge of the American war; and the saving will be from the same sources from whence the evil arose.

As to the national debt, however heavy the interest may be in taxes, yet, as it seems to keep alive a capital, useful to commerce, it balances by its effects a considerable part of its own weight; and as the quantity of gold and silver in England is, by some means or other, short of its proper proportion,* (being not more than twenty millions, whereas it should be sixty,) it would, besides the injustice, be bad policy to extinguish a capital that serves to supply that defect. But, with respect to the current expense, whatever is saved therefrom is gain. The excess may serve to keep corruption alive, but it has no reaction on credit and commerce, like the interest of the debt.

It is now very probable, that the English government (I do not mean the nation) is unfriendly to the French revolution. Whatever serves to expose the intrigue and lessen the influence of

* Foreign intrigues, foreign wars, and foreign dominions, will in a great measure account for the deficiency.

courts, by lessening taxation, will be unwelcome to those who feed upon the spoil. Whilst the clamor of French intrigue, arbitrary power, popery, and wooden shoes could be kept up, the nations were easily allured and alarmed into taxes. Those days are now past; deception, it is to be hoped, has reaped its last harvest, and better times are in prospect for both countries, and for the world.

Taking it for granted that an alliance may be formed between England, France, and America, for the purposes hereafter to be mentioned, the national expenses of France and England may consequently be lessened. The same fleets and armies will no longer be necessary to either, and the reduction can be made ship for ship on each side. But to accomplish these objects, the governments must necessarily be fitted to a common correspondent principle. Confidence can never take place, while an hostile disposition remains in either, or where mystery and secrecy on one side, is opposed to candor and openness on the other.

These matters admitted, the national expenses might be put back, *for the sake of a precedent*, to what they were at some period when France and England were not enemies. This, consequently, must be prior to the Hanover succession, and also to the revolution of 1688.* The first instance that presents itself, antecedent to those dates, is in the very wasteful and profligate time of Charles II. at which time England and France acted as allies. If I have chosen a period of great extravagance, it will serve to show modern extravagance in a still worse light; especially, as the pay of the navy, the army, and the revenue-officers has not increased since that time.

* I happened to be in England at the celebration of the centenary of the revolution of 1688. The characters of William and Mary have always appeared to me detestable; the one seeking to destroy his uncle, and the other her father, to get possession of power themselves: yet, as the nation was disposed to think something of that event, I felt hurt at seeing it ascribe the whole reputation of it to a man who had undertaken it as a job, and who, besides what he otherwise got, charged six hundred thousand pounds for the expense of the little fleet that brought him from Holland. George I. acted the same close-fisted part as William had done, and bought the duchy of Bremen with the money he got from England, two hundred and fifty thousand pounds over and above his pay as king; and having thus purchased it at the expense of England, added to it his Hanoverian dominions for his own private benefit. In fact every nation that does not govern itself, is governed as a job. England has been the prey of jobs ever since the revolution.

The peace establishment was then as follows: See sir John Sinclair's History of the Revenue.

Navy	-	-	-	-	300,000 <i>l</i> .
Army	-	-	-	-	212,000
Ordnance	-	-	-	-	40,000
Civil List	-	-	-	-	462,115
					<hr/> 1,014,115 <i>l</i> .

The parliament, however, settled the whole annual peace-establishment at 1,200,000.* If we go back to the time of Elizabeth, the amount of all the taxes was but half a million, yet the nation sees nothing during that period, that reproaches it with want of consequence.

All circumstances then taken together, arising from the French revolution, from the approaching harmony and reciprocal interest of the two nations, the abolition of court intrigue on both sides, and the progress of knowledge in the science of government, the annual expenditure might be put back to one million and a half, *viz.*

Navy	-	-	-	-	500,000 <i>l</i> .
Army	-	-	-	-	500,000
Expenses of government					500,000
					<hr/> 1,500,000 <i>l</i> .

Even this sum is six times greater than the expenses of government are in America, yet the civil internal government of England (I mean that administered by means of quarter sessions, juries, and assize, and which, in fact, is nearly the whole, and is performed by the nation,) is less expense upon the revenue, than the same species and portion of government is in America.

It is time that nations should be rational, and not be governed like animals for the pleasure of their riders. To read the history of kings, a man would be almost inclined to suppose that government consisted in stag-hunting, and that every nation paid a million a-year to the huntsman. Man ought to have pride, or shame enough to blush at being thus imposed upon, and when he

* Charles, like his predecessors and successors, finding that war was the harvest of governments, engaged in a war with the Dutch, the expense of which increased the annual expenditure to 1,800,000*l*. as stated under the date of 1666; but the peace establishment was but 1,200,000*l*.

feels his proper character, he will. Upon all subjects of this nature, there is often passing in the mind a train of ideas he has not yet accustomed himself to encourage and communicate. Restrained by something that puts on the character of prudence, he acts the hypocrite to himself as well as to others. It is, however, curious to observe how soon this spell can be dissolved. A single expression, boldly conceived and uttered, will sometimes put a whole company into their proper feelings, and a whole nation are acted upon in the same manner.

As to the offices of which any civil government may be composed, it matters but little by what names they are described. In the routine of business, as before observed, whether a man be styled a president, a king, an emperor, a senator, or any thing else, it is impossible that any service he can perform, can merit from a nation more than ten thousand pounds a-year; and as no man should be paid beyond his services, so every man of a proper heart will not accept more. Public money ought to be touched with the most scrupulous consciousness of honor. It is not the produce of riches only, but of the hard earnings of labor and poverty. It is drawn even from the bitterness of want and misery. Not a beggar passes, or perishes in the streets, whose mite is not in that mass.

Were it possible that the congress of America, could be so lost to their duty, and to the interest of their constituents, as to offer general Washington, as president of America, a million a-year, he would not, and he could not accept it. His sense of honor is of another kind. It has cost England almost seventy millions sterling, to maintain a family imported from abroad, of very inferior capacity to thousands in the nation; and scarcely a year has passed that has not produced some mercenary application. Even the physicians' bills have been sent to the public to be paid. No wonder that jails are crowded, and taxes and poor-rates increased. Under such systems, nothing is to be looked for but what has already happened; and as to reformation, whenever it comes, it must be from the nation, and not from the government.

To show that the sum of five hundred thousand pounds is more than sufficient to defray all the expenses of government, exclusive of navies and armies, the following estimate is added for any country, of the same extent as England.

In the first place, three hundred representatives, fairly elected, are sufficient for all the purposes to which legislation can apply, and preferable to a larger number. They may be divided into two, or three houses, or meet in one, as in France, or in any manner a constitution shall direct.

As representation is always considered in free countries, as the most honorable of all stations, the allowance made to it is merely to defray the expenses which the representatives incur by that service, and not to it as an office.

If an allowance at the rate of five hundred pounds per annum be made to every representative, deducting for non-attendance, the expense, if the whole number attended for six months each year, would be - - - - 75,000*l*.

The official departments cannot reasonably exceed the following number, with the salaries annexed :

Three offices, at ten thousand pounds each	30,000
Ten ditto, at five thousand pounds each	50,000
Twenty ditto, at two thousand pounds each	40,000
Forty ditto, at one thousand pounds each	40,000
Two hundred ditto, at five hundred pounds each	100,000
Three hundred ditto, at two hundred pounds each	60,000
Five hundred ditto, at one hundred pounds each	50,000
Seven hundred ditto, at seventy-five pounds each	52,500
	<hr/>
	497,500 <i>l</i> .

If a nation chooses, it can deduct four per cent. from all offices, and make one of twenty thousand per annum.

All revenue-officers are paid out of the monies they collect, and therefore, are not included in this estimation.

The foregoing is not offered as an exact detail of offices, but to show the number and rate of salaries which five hundred thousand pounds will support ; and it will, on experience, be found impracticable to find business sufficient to justify even this expense. As to the manner in which office business is now performed, the chiefs in several offices, such as the post-office, and certain offices in the exchequer, &c. do little more than sign their names three or four times a year ; and the whole duty is performed by under clerks.

Taking, therefore, one million and an half as a sufficient peace establishment for all the honest purposes of government, which is three hundred thousand pounds more than the peace establishment in the profligate and prodigal times of Charles II. (notwithstanding, as has been already observed, the pay and salaries of the army, navy, and revenue-officers, continue the same as at that period,) there will remain a surplus of upwards of six millions out of the present current expenses. The question then will be, how to dispose of this surplus.

Whoever has observed the manner in which trade and taxes twist themselves together, must be sensible of the impossibility of separating them suddenly.

1st, because the articles now on hand are already charged with the duty, and the reduction cannot take place on the present stock.

2d, Because, on all those articles on which the duty is charged in the gross, such as per barrel, hogshead, hundred weight, or ton, the abolition of the duty does not admit of being divided down so as fully to relieve the consumer, who purchases by the pint, or the pound. The last duty laid on strong beer and ale, was three shillings per barrel, which, if taken off, would lessen the purchase only half a farthing per pint, and, consequently, would not reach to practical relief.

This being the condition of a greater part of the taxes, it will be necessary to look for such others as are free from this embarrassment, and where the relief will be direct and visible, and capable of immediate operation.

In the first place, then, the poor-rates are a direct tax which every housekeeper feels, and who knows also, to a farthing, the sum which he pays. The national amount of the whole of the poor-rates is not positively known, but can be procured. Sir John Sinclair, in his History of the Revenue, has stated it at 2,100,587*l*. A considerable part of which is expended in litigations, in which the poor, instead of being relieved, are tormented. The expense, however, is the same to the parish, from whatever cause it arises.

In Birmingham, the amount of the poor-rates is fourteen thousand pounds a-year. This, though a large sum, is moderate compared with the population. Birmingham is said to contain seventy thousand souls, and on a proportion of seventy thousand

to fourteen thousand pounds poor-rates, the national amount of poor-rates, taking the population of England at seven millions, would be but one million four hundred thousand pounds. It is, therefore, most probable, that the population of Birmingham is over-rated. Fourteen thousand pounds is the proportion upon fifty thousand souls, taking two millions of poor rates as the national amount.

Be it, however, what it may, it is no other than the consequence of the excessive burden of taxes, for, at the time when the taxes were very low, the poor were able to maintain themselves; and there were no poor-rates.* In the present state of things, a laboring man, with a wife and two or three children, does not pay less than between seven and eight pounds a-year in taxes. He is not sensible of this, because it is disguised to him in the articles which he buys, and he thinks only of their dearness; but as the taxes take from him, at least, a fourth part of his yearly earnings, he is consequently disabled from providing for a family, especially if himself, or any of them, are afflicted with sickness.

The first step, therefore, of practical relief, would be to abolish the poor-rates entirely, and, in lieu thereof, to make a remission of taxes to the poor to double the amount of the present poor-rates, *viz.* four millions annually out of the surplus taxes. By this measure, the poor would be benefited two millions, and the housekeepers two millions. This alone would be equal to the reduction of one hundred and twenty millions of the national debt, and consequently equal to the whole expense of the American war.

It will then remain to be considered which is the most effectual mode of distributing the remission of four millions.

It is easily seen, that the poor are generally composed of large families of children, and old people unable to labor. If these two classes are provided for, the remedy will so far reach to the full extent of the case, that what remains will be incidental, and, in a great measure, fall within the compass of benefit clubs, which, though of humble invention, merit to be ranked among the best of modern institutions.

* Poor-rates began about the time of Henry VIII. when taxes began to increase, and they have increased as the taxes increased ever since.

Admitting England to contain seven millions of souls ; if one fifth thereof are of that class of poor which need support, the number will be one million four hundred thousand. Of this number, one hundred and forty thousand will be aged poor, as will be hereafter shown, and for which a distinct provision will be proposed.

There will then remain one million two hundred and sixty thousand, which, at five souls to each family, amount to two hundred and fifty-two thousand families, rendered poor from the expense of children and the weight of taxes.

The number of children under fourteen years of age, in each of those families, will be found to be five to every two families ; some having two, others three ; some one, and others four ; some none, and others five ; but it rarely happens that more than five are under fourteen years of age, and after this age they are capable of service, or of being apprenticed.

Allowing five children (under fourteen years) to every two families.

The number of children will be - - - 630,000

The number of parents, were they all living, would be 504,000

It is certain that if the children are provided for, the parents are relieved of consequence, because it is from the expense of bringing up children that their poverty arises.

Having thus ascertained the greatest number that can be supposed to need support on account of young families, I proceed to the mode of relief, or distribution, which is,

To pay as a remission of taxes to every poor family, out of the surplus taxes, and in room of poor-rates, four pounds a year for every child under fourteen years of age ; enjoining the parents of such children to send them to school, to learn reading, writing, and common arithmetic ; the ministers of every parish, of every denomination, to certify jointly to an office, for this purpose, that the duty is performed.

- The amount of this expense will be, for six hundred and thirty thousand children, at 4*l.* each per ann. 2,520,000*l.*

By adopting this method, not only the poverty of the parents will be relieved, but ignorance will be banished from the rising generation, and the number of poor will hereafter become less, because their abilities, by the aid of education, will be greater. Many a youth, with good natural genius, who is apprenticed to a

mechanical trade, such as a carpenter, wheelwright, blacksmith, &c. is prevented getting forward the whole of his life, from the want of a little common education when a boy.

I now proceed to the case of the aged.

I divide age into two classes. 1st, the approach of old age, beginning at fifty : 2d, old age commencing at sixty.

At fifty, though the mental faculties of man are in full vigor, and his judgment better than at any preceding date, the bodily powers are on the decline. He cannot bear the same quantity of fatigue as at an earlier period. He begins to earn less, and is less capable of enduring the wind and weather; and in those retired employments where much sight is required, he fails apace, and feels himself like an old horse, beginning to be turned adrift.

At sixty, his labor ought to be over, at least from direct necessity. It is painful to see old age working itself to death, in what are called civilized countries, for its daily bread.

To form some judgment of the number of those above fifty years of age, I have several times counted the persons I met in the streets of London, men, women, and children, and have generally found that the average is one in about sixteen or seventeen. If it be said that aged persons do not come much into the streets, so neither do infants; and a great proportion of grown children are in schools, and in the work-shops as apprentices. Taking then sixteen for a divisor, the whole number of persons, in England, of fifty years and upwards, of both sexes, rich and poor, will be four hundred and twenty thousand.

The persons to be provided for out of this gross number will be, husbandmen, common laborers, journeymen of every trade, and their wives, sailors, and disbanded soldiers, worn out servants of both sexes, and poor widows.

There will be also a considerable number of middling tradesmen, who, having lived decently in the former part of life, begin, as age approaches, to lose their business, and at last fall into decay.

Besides these, there will be constantly thrown off from the revolutions of that wheel, which no man can stop, nor regulate, a number from every class of life connected with commerce and adventure.

To provide for all those accidents, and whatever else may befall, I take the number of persons, who at one time or other of

their lives, after fifty years of age, may feel it necessary or comfortable to be better supported, than they can support themselves and that not as a matter of grace and favor, but of right, at one third of the whole number, which is one hundred and forty thousand, as stated p. 228, and for whom a distinct provision was proposed to be made. If there be more, society, notwithstanding the show and pomposity of government, is in a deplorable condition in England.

Of this one hundred and forty thousand, I take one half, seventy thousand, to be of the age of fifty and under sixty, and the other half to be sixty years and upwards.—Having thus ascertained the probable proportion of the number of aged persons, I proceed to the mode of rendering their condition comfortable, which is,

To pay to every such person of the age of fifty years, and until he shall arrive at the age of sixty, the sum of six pounds per ann. out of the surplus taxes; and ten pounds per ann. during life, after the age of sixty. The expense of which will be,

Seventy thousand persons at 6 <i>l.</i> per ann.	420,000 <i>l.</i>
Seventy thousand persons at 10 <i>l.</i> per ann.	700,000
	<hr/>
	1,120,000 <i>l.</i>

This support, as already remarked, is not of the nature of charity, but of a right. Every person in England, male and female, pays on an average in taxes, two pounds eight shillings and sixpence per ann. from the day of his (or her) birth; and if the expense of collection be added, he pays two pounds eleven shillings and sixpence; consequently, at the end of fifty years, he has paid one hundred and twenty-eight pounds fifteen shillings; and at sixty, one hundred and fifty-four pounds ten shillings. Converting, therefore, his (or her) individual tax into a tontine, the money he shall receive after fifty years, is but little more than the legal interest of the net money he has paid; the rest is made up from those whose circumstances do not require them to draw such support, and the capital in both cases defrays the expenses of government. It is on this ground that I have extended the probable claims to one third of the number of aged persons in the nation.—Is it then better that the lives of one hundred and forty thousand aged persons be rendered comfortable, or that a million a-year of public money be expended on any one individual, and he often of the most worthless and insignificant character? Let

reason and justice, let honor and humanity, let even hypocrisy, sycophancy, and Mr. Burke, let George, let Louis, Leopold, Frederic, Catherine, Cornwallis, or Tippoo Saib, answer the question.*

The sum thus remitted to the poor will be,	
To two hundred and fifty-two thousand poor families, containing six hundred and thirty thousand children,	2,520,000 <i>l.</i>
To one hundred and forty thousand aged persons,	1,120,000
	<hr/> 3,640,000 <i>l.</i>

There will then remain three hundred and sixty thousand pounds out of the four millions, part of which may be applied as follows :

After all the above cases are provided for, there will still be a number of families who, though not properly of the class of poor, yet find it difficult to give education to their children ; and such children, under such a case, would be in a worse condition than if their parents were actually poor. A nation under a well regulated government, should permit none to remain uninstructed. It is monarchical and aristocratical governments only that require ignorance for their support.

Suppose then four hundred thousand children to be in this condition, which is a greater number than ought to be supposed, after the provisions already made, the method will be,

To allow for each of those children ten shillings a-year for the expense of schooling, for six years each, which will give them six months schooling each year, and half a crown a-year for paper and spelling books.

* Reckoning the taxes by families, five to a family, each family pays on an average 12*l.* 17*s.* and 6*d.* per ann. to this sum are to be added the poor-rates. Though all pay taxes in the articles they consume, all do not pay poor-rates. About two millions are exempted, some as not being housekeepers, others as not being able, and the poor themselves who receive the relief. The average therefore of poor-rates on the remaining number, is forty shillings for every family of five persons, which makes the whole average amount of taxes and rates, 14*l.* 17*s.* 6*d.* for six persons, 17*l.* 17*s.*—for seven persons, 20*l.* 16*s.* 6*d.*

The average of taxes in America, under the new or representative system of government, including the interest of the debt contracted in the war, and taking the population at four millions of souls, which it now amounts to, and is daily increasing, is five shillings per head, men, women, and children. The difference, therefore, between the two governments, is as under :

	England.	America.
For a family of five persons	14 <i>l.</i> 17 <i>s.</i> 6 <i>d.</i>	1 <i>l.</i> 5 <i>s.</i> 0 <i>d.</i>
For a family of six persons	17 17 0	1 10 0
For a family of seven persons	20 16 6	1 15 0

The expense of this will be annually* 250,000*l*.

There will then remain one hundred and ten thousand pounds.

Notwithstanding the great modes of relief which the best instituted and best principled government may devise, there will still be a number of smaller cases, which it is good policy as well as beneficence in a nation to consider.

Were twenty shillings to be given to every woman immediately on the birth of a child, who should make the demand, and none will make it whose circumstances do not require it, it might relieve a great deal of instant distress.

There are about two hundred thousand births yearly in England; and if claimed by one fourth,

The amount would be - - - - 50,000*l*.

And twenty shillings to every new married couple who should claim in like manner. This would not exceed the sum of 20,000*l*.

Also twenty thousand pounds to be appropriated to defray the funeral expenses of persons, who, travelling for work, may die at a distance from their friends. By relieving parishes from this charge, the sick stranger will be better treated.

I shall finish this part of my subject with a plan adapted to the particular condition of a metropolis, such as London.

Cases are continually occurring in a metropolis different from those which occur in the country, and for which a different, or rather an additional mode of relief is necessary. In the country, even in large towns, people have a knowledge of each other, and distress never rises to that extreme height it sometimes does in a metropolis. There is no such thing in the country as persons, in the literal sense of the word, starved to death, or dying with cold from the want of a lodging. Yet such cases, and others equally as miserable, happen in London.

* Public schools do not answer the general purpose of the poor. They are chiefly in corporation-towns, from which the country towns and villages are excluded—or if admitted, the distance occasions a great loss of time. Education, to be useful to the poor, should be on the spot—and the best method, I believe, to accomplish this, is to enable the parents to pay the expense themselves. There are always persons of both sexes to be found in every village, especially when growing into years, capable of such an undertaking. Twenty children, at ten shillings each (and that not more than six months in each year,) would be as much as some livings amount to in the remote parts of England—and there are often distressed clergymen's widows to whom such an income would be acceptable. Whatever is given on this account to children answers two purposes, to them it is education, to those who educate them it is a livelihood.

Many a youth comes up to London full of expectations, and little or no money, and unless he gets employment he is already half undone ; and boys bred up in London without any means of a livelihood, and, as it often happens, of dissolute parents, are in a still worse condition, and servants long out of place are not much better off. In short, a world of little cases are continually arising, which busy or affluent life knows not of, to open the first door to distress. Hunger is not among the postponable wants, and a day, even a few hours, in such a condition, is often the crisis of a life of ruin.

These circumstances, which are the general cause of the little thefts and pilferings that lead to greater, may be prevented. There yet remain twenty thousand pounds out of the four millions of surplus taxes, which, with another fund hereafter to be mentioned, amounting to about twenty thousand pounds more, cannot be better applied than to this purpose. The plan then will be,

1st, To erect two or more buildings, or take some already erected, capable of containing at least six thousand persons, and to have in each of these places as many kinds of employment as can be contrived, so that every person who shall come may find something which he or she can do.

2d, To receive all who shall come, without inquiring who or what they are. The only condition to be, that for so much or so many hours work, each person shall receive so many meals of wholesome food, and a warm lodging, at least as good as a barrack. That a certain portion of what each person's work shall be worth shall be reserved, and given to him, or her, on their going away ; and that each person shall stay as long, or as short time, or come as often as he chooses, on these conditions.

If each person staid three months, it would assist by rotation twenty-four thousand persons annually, though the real number, at all times, would be but six thousand. By establishing an asylum of this kind, such persons, to whom temporary distresses occur, would have an opportunity to recruit themselves, and be enabled to look out for better employment.

Allowing that their labor paid but one half the expense of supporting them, after reserving a portion of their earnings for themselves, the sum of forty thousand pounds additional would defray all other charges for even a greater number than six thousand.

The fund very properly convertible to this purpose, in addition to the twenty thousand pounds, remaining of the former fund, will be the produce of the tax upon coals, and so iniquitously and wantonly applied to the support of the duke of Richmond. It is horrid that any man, more especially at the price coals now are, should live on the distresses of a community; and any government permitting such an abuse deserves to be dissolved. This fund is said to be about twenty thousand pounds per annum.

I shall now conclude this plan with enumerating the several particulars, and then proceed to other matters.

The enumeration is as follows :

1st, Abolition of two millions poor-rates.

2d, Provision for two hundred and fifty-two thousand poor families.

3d, Education for one million and thirty thousand children.

4th, Comfortable provision for one hundred and forty thousand aged persons.

5th, Donation of twenty shillings each for fifty thousand births.

6th, Donation of twenty shillings each for twenty thousand marriages.

7th, Allowance of twenty thousand pounds for the funeral expenses of persons travelling for work, and dying at a distance from their friends.

8th, Employment, at all times, for the casual poor in the cities of London and Westminster.

By the operation of this plan, the poor laws, those instruments of civil torture, will be superseded, and the wasteful expense of litigation prevented. The hearts of the humane will not be shocked by ragged and hungry children, and persons of seventy and eighty years of age begging for bread. The dying poor will not be dragged from place to place to breathe their last, as a reprisal of parish upon parish. Widows will have a maintenance for their children, and not be carted away, on the death of their husbands, like culprits and criminals; and children will no longer be considered as increasing the distresses of their parents. The haunts of the wretched will be known, because it will be to their advantage; and the number of petty crimes, the offspring of distress and poverty, will be lessened. The poor, as well as the rich, will then be interested in the support of government, and the cause

and apprehension of riots and tumults will cease. Ye who sit in ease, and solace yourselves in plenty, and such there are in Turkey and Russia, as well as in England, and who say to yourselves, "Are we not well off," have ye thought of these things? When ye do, ye will cease to speak and feel for yourselves alone.

The plan is easy in practice. It does not embarrass trade by a sudden interruption in the order of taxes, but effects the relief by changing the application of them; and the money necessary for the purpose, can be drawn from the excise collections, which are made eight times a-year in every market town in England.

Having now arranged and concluded this subject, I proceed to the next.

Taking the present current expenses at seven millions and an half, which is the least amount they are now at, there will remain (after the sum of one million and an half be taken for the new current expenses, and four millions for the beforementioned service) the sum of two millions, part of which to be applied as follows :

Though fleets and armies, by an alliance with France, will, in a great measure, become useless, yet the persons who have devoted themselves to those services, and have thereby unfitted themselves for other lines of life, are not to be sufferers by the means that make others happy.—They are a different description of men to those who form or hang about a court.

A part of the army will remain at least for some years, and also of the navy, for which a provision is already made, in the former part of this plan, of one million, which is almost half a million more than the peace establishment of the army and navy in the prodigal times of Charles II.

Suppose then fifteen thousand soldiers to be disbanded, and to allow to each of those men three shillings a week during life, clear of all deductions, to be paid in the same manner as the Chelsea college pensioners are paid, and for them to return to their trades and their friends; and also to add fifteen thousand sixpences per week to the pay of the soldiers who shall remain; the annual expense will be,

To the pay of fifteen thousand disbanded soldiers,	
at three shillings per week, - - - - -	117,000 <i>l</i> .
Additional pay to the remaining soldiers, - - -	19,500
Suppose that the pay to the officers of the disbanded	
corps be of the same amount as the sum allowed	
to the men - - - - -	117,000
	<hr/>
	253,500 <i>l</i>

To prevent bulky estimations, admit the same sum	
to the disbanded navy as to the army, and the	
same increase of pay - - - - -	253,500 <i>l</i> .

Total, 507,000*l*.

Every year some part of this sum of half a million (I omit the odd seven thousand pounds, for the purpose of keeping the account unembarrassed) will fall in, and the whole of it in time, as it is on the ground of life annuities, except the increased pay of thirty-nine thousand pounds. As it falls in, a part of the taxes may be taken off; for instance, when thirty thousand pounds fall in, the duty on hops may be wholly taken off; and as other parts fall in, the duties on candles and soap may be lessened, till at last they will totally cease.—There now remains at least one million and a half of surplus taxes.

The tax on houses and windows is one of those direct taxes, which, like the poor-rates, is not confounded with trade; and when taken off, the relief will be instantly felt. This tax falls heavy on the middle class of people.

The amount of this tax by the returns of 1788,	
was,	£ s. d.
Houses and windows by the act of 1766	385,459 11 7
do. do. by the act of 1779	130,739 14 5½

Total, 516,199 6 0½

If this tax be struck off, there will then remain about one million of surplus taxes, and as it is always proper to keep a sum in reserve, for incidental matters, it may be best not to extend reductions further, in the first instance, but to consider what may be accomplished by other modes of reform.

Among the taxes most heavily felt is the commutation tax. I shall, therefore, offer a plan for its abolition, by substituting another in its place, which will effect three objects at once :

1st, That of removing the burden to where it can best be borne.

2d, Restoring justice among families by distribution of property.

3d, Extirpating the overgrown influence arising from the unnatural law of primogeniture, and which is one of the principal sources of corruption at elections.

The amount of the commutation tax by the returns

of 1788, was, - - - - - - 771,657*l*.

When taxes are proposed, the country is amused by the plausible language of taxing luxuries. One thing is called a luxury at one time, and something else at another; but the real luxury does not consist in the article, but in the means of procuring it, and this is always kept out of sight.

I know not why any plant or herb of the field should be a greater luxury in one country than another, but an overgrown estate in either is a luxury at all times, and, as such, is the proper object of taxation. It is, therefore, right to take those kind tax-making gentlemen up on their own word, and argue on the principle themselves have laid down, that of *taxing luxuries*. If they or their champion, Mr. Burke, who, I fear, is growing out of date like the man in armor, can prove that an estate of twenty, thirty or forty thousand pounds a-year is not a luxury, I will give up the argument.

Admitting that any annual sum, say, for instance, one thousand pounds, is necessary or sufficient for the support of a family, consequently the second thousand is of the nature of a luxury, the third still more so, and by proceeding on, we shall at last arrive at a sum that may not improperly be called a prohibitable luxury. It would be impolitic to set bounds to property acquired by industry, and therefore it is right to place the prohibition beyond the probable acquisition to which industry can extend; but there ought to be a limit to property, or the accumulation of it by bequest. It should pass in some other line. The richest in every nation have poor relations, and those often very near in consanguinity.

The following table of progressive taxation is constructed on the above principles, and as a substitute for the commutation tax. It will reach the point of prohibition by a regular operation, and thereby supersede the aristocratical law of primogeniture.

TABLE I.

A tax on all estates of the clear yearly value of fifty pounds, after deducting the land tax, and up

To 500 <i>l.</i>	-	-	-	-	-	3 <i>d.</i>	per pound.
From 500 to 1000	-	-	-	-	-	6	" "
On the 2d thousand	-	-	-	-	-	9	" "
On the 3d ditto	-	-	-	-	-	1 <i>s.</i> 0	" "
On the 4th ditto	-	-	-	-	-	1 6	" "

And so on, adding 1*s.* per pound on every additional thousand.

At the twenty-third thousand the tax becomes twenty shillings in the pound, and, consequently, every thousand beyond that sum, can produce no profit but by dividing the estate. Yet, formidable as this tax appears, it will not, I believe, produce so much as the commutation tax; should it produce more, it ought to be lowered to that amount upon estates under two or three thousand a-year.

On small and middling estates it is lighter (as it is intended to be) than the commutation tax. It is not till after seven or eight thousand a-year, that it begins to be heavy. The object is not so much the produce of the tax as the justice of the measure. The aristocracy has screened itself too much, and this serves to restore a part of the lost equilibrium.

As an instance of its screening itself, it is only necessary to look back to the first establishment of the excise laws, at what is called the revolution, or the coming of Charles II. The aristocratical interest then in power, commuted the feudal services itself was under, by laying a tax on beer brewed for sale; that is, they compounded with Charles for an exemption from those services for themselves and their heirs, by a tax to be paid by other people. The aristocracy do not purchase beer brewed for sale, but brew their own beer free of the duty, and if any commutation at that time was necessary, it ought to have been at the expense of those for whom the exemptions from those services were intended;* instead of which, it was thrown on an entire different class of men.

* The tax on beer brewed for sale, from which the aristocracy are exempt, is almost one million more than the present commutation tax, being by the returns of 1788, 1,666,152*l.*—and, consequently, they ought to take on themselves the amount of the commutation tax, as they are already exempted from one which is almost a million greater.

But the chief object of this progressive tax (besides the justice of rendering taxes more equal than they are) is, as already stated, to extirpate the overgrown influence arising from the unnatural law of primogeniture, and which is one of the principal sources of corruption at elections.

It would be attended with no good consequences to inquire how such vast estates as thirty, forty, or fifty thousand a-year could commence, and that at a time when commerce and manufactures were not in a state to admit of such acquisitions. Let it be sufficient to remedy the evil by putting them in a condition of descending again to the community by the quiet means of apportioning them among all the heirs and heiresses of those families. This will be the more necessary, because hitherto the aristocracy have quartered their younger children and connexions upon the public, in useless posts, places and offices, which, when abolished, will leave them destitute, unless the law of primogeniture be also abolished or superseded.

A progressive tax will, in a great measure, effect this object, and that as a matter of interest to the parties most immediately concerned, as will be seen by the following table; which shows the nett produce upon every estate, after subtracting the tax. By this it will appear, that after an estate exceeds thirteen or fourteen thousand a-year, the remainder produces but little profit to the holder, and consequently, will either pass to the younger children or to other kindred.

TABLE II.

Showing the nett produce of every estate from one thousand to twenty-three thousand pounds a-year.

No. of thousands per ann.	Total tax subtracted.	Nett produce.
1000 <i>l.</i>	21 <i>l.</i>	979 <i>l.</i>
2000	59	1941
3000	109	2891
4000	184	3861
5000	284	4716
6000	434	5566
7000	634	6366
8000	880	7120
9000	1180	7820
10,000	1530	8470
11,000	1930	9070
12,000	2380	9620
13,000	2880	10,120
14,000	3430	10,570
15,000	4030	10,970
16,000	4680	11,320
17,000	5380	11,620
18,000	6130	11,870
19,000	6930	12,170
20,000	7780	12,220
21,000	8680	12,320
22,000	9630	12,370
23,000	10,630	12,370

N. B. The odd shillings are dropped in this table.

According to this table, an estate cannot produce more than 12,370*l.* clear of the land tax and the progressive tax, and therefore the dividing such estates will follow as a matter of family interest. An estate of 23,000*l.* a-year, divided into five estates of four thousand each and one of three, will be charged only 1129*l.* which is but five per cent., but if held by any one possessor, will be charged 10,630*l.*

Although an inquiry into the origin of those estates be unnecessary, the continuation of them in their present state is another subject. It is a matter of national concern. As hereditary estates, the law has created the evil, and it ought also to provide the remedy. Primogeniture ought to be abolished, not only because it is unnatural and unjust, but because the country suffers by its

operation. By cutting off (as before observed) the younger children from their proper portion of inheritance, the public is loaded with the expense of maintaining them ; and the freedom of elections violated by the overbearing influence which this unjust monopoly of family property produces. Nor is this all. It occasions a waste of national property. A considerable part of the land of the country is rendered unproductive, by the great extent of parks and chases which this law serves to keep up, and this at a time when the annual production of grain is not equal to the national consumption.*—In short, the evils of the aristocratical system are so great and numerous, so inconsistent with every thing that is just, wise, natural and beneficent, that when they are considered, there ought not to be a doubt that many, who are now classed under that description, will wish to see such a system abolished.

What pleasure can they derive from contemplating the exposed condition, and almost certain beggary of their younger offspring ? Every aristocratical family has an appendage of family beggars hanging round it, which in a few ages, or a few generations, are shook off, and console themselves with telling their tale in almshouses, work-houses, and prisons. This is the natural consequence of aristocracy. The peer and the beggar are often of the same family. One extreme produces the other : to make one rich many must be made poor ; neither can the system be supported by other means.

There are two classes of people to whom the laws of England are particularly hostile, and those the most helpless ; younger children, and the poor. Of the former I have just spoken ; of the latter I shall mention one instance out of the many that might be produced, and with which I shall close this subject.

Several laws are in existence for regulating and limiting workmen's wages. Why not leave them as free to make their own bargains, as the law-makers are to let their farms and houses ? Personal labor is all the property they have. Why is that little, and the little freedom they enjoy, to be infringed ? But the injustice will appear stronger, if we consider the operation and effect of such laws. When wages are fixed by what is called a law, the legal wages remain stationary, while every thing else is

* See the Reports on the Corn Trade.

in progression ; and as those who make that law, still continue to lay on new taxes by other laws, they increase the expense of living by one law, and take away the means by another.

But if these gentlemen law-makers and tax-makers thought it right to limit the poor pittance which personal labor can produce. and on which a whole family is to be supported, they certainly must feel themselves happily indulged in a limitation on their own part, of not less than twelve thousand a-year, and that of property they never acquired, (nor probably any of their ancestors) and of which they have made so ill a use.

Having now finished this subject, I shall bring the several particulars into one view, and then proceed to other matters.

The first eight articles are brought forward from p. 235.

1. Abolition of two millions poor-rates.

2. Provision for two hundred and fifty-two thousand poor families, at the rate of four pounds per head for each child under fourteen years of age ; which, with the addition of two hundred and fifty thousand pounds, provides also education for one million and thirty thousand children.

3. Annuity of six pounds per annum each for all poor persons, decayed tradesmen and others, supposed seventy thousand, of the age of fifty years, and until sixty.

4. Annuity of ten pounds each for life for all poor persons, decayed tradesmen, and others, supposed seventy thousand, of the age of sixty years.

5. Donation of twenty shillings each for fifty thousand births.

6. Donation of twenty shillings each for twenty thousand marriages.

7. Allowance of twenty thousand pounds for the funeral expenses of persons travelling for work, and dying at a distance from their friends.

8. Employment at all times for the casual poor in the cities of London and Westminster.

Second enumeration.

9. Abolition of the tax on houses and windows.

10. Allowance of three shillings per week for life to fifteen thousand disbanded soldiers, and a proportionate allowance to the officers of the disbanded corps.

11. Increase of pay to the remaining soldiers of 19,500*l.* annually

12. The same allowance to the disbanded navy, and the same increase of pay, as to the army.

13. Abolition of the commutation tax.

14. Plan of a progressive tax, operating to extirpate the unjust and unnatural law of primogeniture, and the vicious influence of the aristocratical system *

There yet remains, as already stated, one million of surplus taxes. Some part of this will be required for circumstances that do not immediately present themselves, and such part as shall not be wanted, will admit of a further reduction of taxes equal to that amount.

Among the claims that justice requires to be made, the condition of the inferior revenue-officers will merit attention. It is a reproach to any government to waste such an immensity of revenue in sinecures and nominal and unnecessary places and offices, and not allow even a decent livelihood to those on whom the labor falls. The salary of the inferior officers of the revenue has stood at the petty pittance of less than fifty pounds a-year for upwards of one hundred years. It ought to be seventy. About one hundred and twenty thousand pounds applied to this purpose, will put all those salaries in a decent condition.

This was proposed to be done almost twenty years ago, but the treasury board then in being, startled at it, as it might lead to similar expectations from the army and navy; and the event was, that the king, or somebody for him, applied to parliament to have

* When inquiries are made into the condition of the poor, various degrees of distress will most probably be found, to render a different arrangement preferable to that which is already proposed. Widows with families will be in greater want than where there are husbands living. There is also a difference in the expense of living in different counties—and more so in fuel.

Suppose fifty thousand extraordinary cases, at the rate of ten pounds per family per ann.	-	-	-	-	500,000 <i>l.</i>
100,000 families, at 8 <i>l.</i> per family per ann.	-	-	-	-	800,000
100,000 families, at 7 <i>l.</i> per " "	-	-	-	-	700,000
104,000 families, at 5 <i>l.</i> per " "	-	-	-	-	520,000
And instead of ten shillings per head for the education of other children, to allow fifty shillings per family for that purpose to fifty thousand families	-	-	-	-	250,000
					<hr/> 2,770,000
140,000 aged persons as before,					1,120,000
					<hr/> 3,890,000 <i>l.</i>

This arrangement amounts to the same sum as stated in p. 232, including the 250,000*l.* for education: but it provides (including the aged people) for four hundred and four thousand families, which is almost one third of all the families in England.

his own salary raised an hundred thousand pounds a-year, which being done, every thing else was laid aside.

With respect to another class of men, the inferior clergy, I forbear to enlarge on their condition ; but all partialities and prejudices for, or against, different modes and forms of religion aside, common justice will determine, whether there ought to be an income of twenty or thirty pounds a-year to one man, and of ten thousand to another. I speak on this subject with the more freedom, because I am known not to be a Presbyterian ; and therefore the cant cry of court sycophants, about church and meeting, kept up to amuse and bewilder the nation, cannot be raised against me.

Ye simple men on both sides the question, do you not see through this courtly craft ? If ye can be kept disputing and wrangling about church and meeting, ye just answer the purpose of every courtier, who lives the while on the spoil of the taxes, and laughs at your credulity.—Every religion is good that teaches man to be good ; and I know of none that instructs him to be bad.

All the beforementioned calculations, suppose only sixteen millions and an half of taxes paid into the exchequer, after the expense of collection and drawbacks at the custom-house and excise-office are deducted ; whereas the sum paid into the exchequer is very nearly, if not quite, seventeen millions. The taxes raised in Scotland and Ireland are expended in those countries, and therefore their savings will come out of their own taxes : but if any part be paid into the English exchequer, it might be remitted.—This will not make one hundred thousand pounds a-year difference.

There now remains only the national debt to be considered. In the year 1789, the interest, exclusive of the tontine, was 9,150,138*l*. How much the capital has been reduced since that time the minister best knows. But after paying the interest, abolishing the tax on houses and windows, the commutation tax and the poor-rates, and making all the provisions for the poor, for the education of children, the support of the aged, the disbanded part of the army and navy, and increasing the pay of the remainder, there will be a surplus of one million.

The present scheme of paying off the national debt appears to me, speaking as an indifferent person, to be an ill concerted, if

not a fallacious job. The burden of the national debt consists not in its being so many millions, or so many hundred millions. out in the quantity of taxes collected every year to pay the interest. If this quantity continues the same, the burden of the national debt is the same to all intents and purposes, be the capital more or less.—The only knowledge which the public can have of the reduction of the debt, must be through the reduction of taxes for paying the interest. The debt, therefore, is not reduced one farthing to the public by all the millions that have been paid ; and it would require more money now to purchase up the capital, than when the scheme began.

Digressing for a moment at this point, to which I shall return again, I look back to the appointment of Mr. Pitt, as minister.

I was then in America. The war was over ; and though resentment had ceased, memory was still alive.

When the news of the coalition arrived, though it was a matter of no concern to me as a citizen of America, I felt it as a man. It had something in it which shocked, by publicly sporting with decency, if not with principle. It was impudence in lord North ; it was a want of firmness in Mr. Fox.

Mr. Pitt was, at that time, what may be called a maiden character in politics. So far from being hackneyed, he appeared not to be initiated into the first mysteries of court intrigue. Every thing was in his favor. Resentment against the coalition served as friendship to him, and his ignorance of vice was credited for virtue. With the return of peace, commerce and prosperity would rise of itself ; yet even this increase was thrown to his account.

When he came to the helm, the storm was over, and he had nothing to interrupt his course. It required even ingenuity to be wrong, and he succeeded. A little time showed him the same sort of man as his predecessors had been. Instead of profiting by those errors which had accumulated a burden of taxes unparalleled in the world, he sought, I might almost say, he advertised for enemies, and provoked means to increase taxation. Aiming at something, he knew not what, he ransacked Europe and India for adventures, and abandoning the fair pretensions he began with, became the knight-errant of modern times.

It is unpleasant to see character throw itself away. It is more so to see one's self deceived. Mr. Pitt had merited nothing, but he promised much. He gave symptoms of a mind superior to

the meanness and corruption of courts. His apparent candor encouraged expectations ; and the public confidence, stunned, wearied, and confounded by a chaos of parties, revived and attached itself to him. But mistaking, as he has done, the disgust of the nation against the coalition, for merit in himself, he has rushed into measures, which a man less supported would not have presumed to act.

All this seems to show that change of ministers amounts to nothing. One goes out, another comes in, and still the same measures, vices, and extravagance are pursued. It signifies not who is minister. The defect lies in the system. The foundation and the superstructure of the government is bad. Prop it as you please, it continually sinks into court government, and ever will.

I return, as I promised, to the subject of the national debt, that offspring of the Dutch-Anglo revolution, and its handmaid, the Hanover succession.

But it is now too late to inquire how it began. Those to whom it is due have advanced the money ; and whether it was well or ill spent, or pocketed, is not their crime.—It is, however, easy to see, that as the nation proceeds in contemplating the nature and principles of government, and to understand taxes, and make comparisons between those of America, France, and England, it will be next to impossible to keep it in the same torpid state it has hitherto been. Some reform must, from the necessity of the case, soon begin. It is not whether these principles press with little or much force in the present moment. They are out. They are abroad in the world, and no force can stop them. Like a secret told, they are beyond recall ; and he must be blind indeed that does not see that a change is already beginning.

Nine millions of dead taxes is a serious thing ; and this not only for bad, but in a great measure for foreign government. By putting the power of making war into the hands of the foreigners who came for what they could get, little else was to be expected than what has happened.

Reasons are already advanced in this work, showing that whatever the reforms in the taxes may be, they ought to be made in the current expenses of government, and not in the part applied to the interest of the national debt.—By remitting the taxes of the poor, *they* will be totally relieved and all discontent will be taken away ; and by striking off such of the taxes as are already

mentioned, the nation will more than recover the whole expense of the mad American war.

There will then remain only the national debt as a subject of discontent, and in order to remove, or rather to prevent this, it would be good policy in the stockholders themselves to consider it as property, subject like all other property, to bear some portion of the taxes. It would give to it both popularity and security, and, as a great part of its present inconvenience is balanced by the capital which it keeps alive, a measure of this kind would so far add to that balance as to silence objections.

This may be done by such gradual means as to accomplish all that is necessary with the greatest ease and convenience.

Instead of taxing the capital, the best method would be to tax the interest by some progressive ratio, and to lessen the public taxes in the same proportion as the interest diminished.

Suppose the interest was taxed one halfpenny in the pound the first year, a penny more the second, and to proceed by a certain ratio to be determined upon, always less than any other tax upon property. Such a tax would be subtracted from the interest at the time of payment, without any expense of collection.

One halfpenny in the pound would lessen the interest and consequently the taxes, twenty thousand pounds. The tax on wagons amounts to this sum, and this tax might be taken off the first year. The second year the tax on female servants, or some other of the like amount might also be taken off, and by proceeding in this manner, always applying the tax raised from the property of the debt towards its extinction, and not carrying it to the current services, it would liberate itself.

The stockholders, notwithstanding this tax, would pay less taxes than they do now. What they would save by the extinction of the poor-rates, and the tax on houses and windows, and the commutation tax, would be considerably greater than what this tax, slow, but certain in its operation, amounts to.

It appears to me to be prudence to look out for measures that may apply under any circumstance that may approach. There is, at this moment, a crisis in the affairs of Europe that requires it. Preparation now is wisdom. If taxation be once let loose, it will be difficult to reinstate it; neither would the relief be so effectual, as if it proceeded by some certain and gradual reduction.

The fraud, hypocrisy, and imposition of governments, are now beginning to be too well understood to promise them any longer career. The farce of monarchy and aristocracy, in all countries, is following that of chivalry, and Mr. Burke is dressing for the funeral. Let it then pass quietly to the tomb of all other follies, and the mourners be comforted.

The time is not very distant, when England will laugh at itself for sending to Holland, Hanover, Zell, or Brunswick for men, at the expense of a million a-year, who understood neither her laws, her language, nor her interest, and whose capacities would scarcely have fitted them for the office of a parish constable. If government could be trusted to such hands, it must be some easy and simple thing indeed, and materials fit for all the purposes may be found in every town and village in England.

When it shall be said in any country in the world, my poor are happy : neither ignorance nor distress is to be found among them ; my jails are empty of prisoners, my streets of beggars ; the aged are not in want, the taxes are not oppressive ; the rational world is my friend, because I am the friend of its happiness : when these things can be said, then may that country boast of its constitution and its government.

Within the space of a few years we have seen two revolutions, those of America and France. In the former, the contest was long and the conflict severe ; in the latter, the nation acted with such a consolidated impulse, that having no foreign enemy to contend with, the revolution was complete in power the moment it appeared. From both those instances it is evident, that the greatest forces that can be brought into the field of revolutions, are reason and common interest. Where these can have the opportunity of acting, opposition dies with fear, or crumbles away by conviction. It is a great standing which they have now universally obtained ; and we may hereafter hope to see revolutions, or changes in governments, produced with the same quiet operation by which any measure, determinable by reason and discussion, is accomplished.

When a nation changes its opinion and habits of thinking, it is no longer to be governed as before ; but it would not only be wrong, but bad policy, to attempt by force what ought to be accomplished by reason. Rebellion consists in forcibly opposing

the general will of a nation, whether by a party or by a government. There ought, therefore, to be in every nation a method of occasionally ascertaining the state of public opinion with respect to government. On this point the old government of France was superior to the present government of England, because, on extraordinary occasions, recourse could be had to what was then called the states-general. But in England there are no such occasional bodies ; and as to those who are now called representatives, a great part of them are mere machines of the court, placemen and dependants.

I presume, that though all the people of England pay taxes, not an hundredth part of them are electors, and the members of one of the houses of parliament represent nobody but themselves. There is, therefore, no power but the voluntary will of the people that has a right to act in any matter respecting a general reform ; and by the same right that two persons can confer on such a subject, a thousand may. The object, in all such preliminary proceedings, is to find out what the general sense of a nation is, and to be governed by it. If it prefer a bad or defective government to a reform, or choose to pay ten times more taxes than there is any occasion for, it has a right so to do ; and so long as the majority do not impose conditions on the minority, different from what they impose upon themselves, though there may be much error, there is no injustice. Neither will the error continue long. Reason and discussion will soon bring things right, however wrong they may begin. By such a process no tumult is to be apprehended. The poor, in all countries, are naturally both peaceable and grateful in all reforms in which their interest and happiness are included. It is only by neglecting and rejecting them that they become tumultuous.

The objects that now press on the public attention are, the French revolution, and the prospect of a general revolution in governments. Of all nations in Europe there is none so much interested in the French revolution as England. Enemies for ages, and that at a vast expense, and without any national object the opportunity now presents itself of amicably closing the scene, and joining their efforts to reform the rest of Europe. By doing this they will not only prevent the further effusion of blood, and increase of taxes, but be in a condition of getting rid of a considerable part of their present burdens, as has been already stated.

Long experience, however, has shown, that reforms of this kind are not those which old governments wish to promote, and therefore, it is to nations, and not to such governments, that these matters present themselves.

In the preceding part of this work, I have spoken of an alliance between England, France, and America, for purposes that were to be afterwards mentioned. Though I have no direct authority on the part of America, I have good reason to conclude that she is disposed to enter into a consideration of such a measure, provided that the governments with which she might ally, acted as national governments, and not as courts enveloped in intrigue and mystery. That France as a nation and a national government, would prefer an alliance with England, is a matter of certainty. Nations, like individuals who have long been enemies, without knowing each other, or knowing why, become better friends when they discover the errors and impositions under which they had acted.

Admitting, therefore, the probability of such a connexion, I will state some matters by which such an alliance, together with that of Holland, might render service, not only to the parties immediately concerned, but to all parts of Europe.

It is, I think, quite certain, that if the fleets of England, France, and Holland were confederated, they could propose, with effect, a limitation to, and a general dismantling of, all the navies in Europe, to a certain proportion to be agreed upon.

1st, That no new ship of war shall be built by any power in Europe, themselves included.

2d, That all the navies now in existence shall be put back, supposed to one tenth of their present force. This will save to France and England, each, at least two millions annually, and their relative force be in the same proportion as it is now. If men will permit themselves to think, as rational beings ought to think, nothing can appear more ridiculous and absurd, exclusive of all moral reflections, than to be at the expense of building navies, filling them with men, and then hauling them into the ocean, to try which can sink each other fastest. Peace, which costs nothing, is attended with infinitely more advantage, than any victory with all its expense. But this, though it best answers the purpose of nations, does not that of court governments, whose habitual policy is pretence for taxation, places, and offices

It is, I think, also certain, that the above confederated powers, together with that of the United States of America, can propose, with effect, to Spain, the independence of South America, and the opening those countries of immense extent and wealth to the general commerce of the world, as North America now is.

With how much more glory, and advantage to itself, does a nation act, when it exerts its powers to rescue the world from bondage, and to create to itself friends, than when it employs those powers to increase ruin, desolation, and misery. The horrid scene that is now acting by the English government in the East Indies, is fit only to be told of Goths and Vandals, who, destitute of principle, robbed and tortured the world which they were incapable of enjoying.

The opening of South America would produce an immense field for commerce, and a ready money market for manufactures, which the eastern world does not. The East is already a country of manufactures, the importation of which is not only an injury to the manufactures of England, but a drain upon its specie. The balance against England by this trade is regularly upwards of half a million annually sent out in the East India ships in silver; and this is the reason, together with German intrigue, and German subsidies, that there is so little silver in England.

But any war is harvest to such governments, however ruinous it may be to a nation. It serves to keep up deceitful expectations, which prevent people from looking into the defects and abuses of government. It is the *lo here!* and the *lo there!* that amuses and cheats the multitude.

Never did so great an opportunity offer itself to England, and to all Europe, as is produced by the two revolutions of America and France. By the former, freedom has a national champion in the western world; and by the latter, in Europe. When another nation shall join France, despotism and bad government will scarcely dare to appear. To use a trite expression, the iron is becoming hot all over Europe. The insulted German and the enslaved Spaniard, the Russ and the Pole are beginning to think. The present age will hereafter merit to be called the Age of Reason, and the present generation will appear to the future as the Adam of a new world.

When all the governments of Europe shall be established on the representative system, nations will become acquainted, and the animosities and prejudices fomented by the intrigues and artifice of courts, will cease. The oppressed soldier will become a freeman ; and the tortured sailor, no longer dragged through the streets like a felon, will pursue his mercantile voyage in safety. It would be better that nations should continue the pay of their soldiers during their lives, and give them their discharge and restore them to freedom and their friends, and cease recruiting, than retain such multitudes at the same expense, in a condition useless to society and to themselves. As soldiers have hitherto been treated in most countries, they might be said to be without a friend. Shunned by the citizen on an apprehension of their being enemies to liberty, and too often insulted by those who commanded them, their condition was a double oppression. But where genuine principles of liberty pervade a people, every thing is restored to order ; and the soldier civilly treated, returns the civility.

In contemplating revolutions, it is easy to perceive that they may arise from two distinct causes ; the one, to avoid or get rid of some great calamity, the other, to obtain some great and positive good ; and the two may be distinguished by the names of active and passive revolutions. In those which proceed from the former cause, the temper becomes incensed and soured ; and the redress, obtained by danger, is too often sullied by revenge. But in those which proceed from the latter, the heart, rather animated than agitated, enters serenely upon the subject. Reason and discussion, persuasion and conviction, become the weapons in the contest, and it is only when those are attempted to be suppressed that recourse is had to violence. When men unite in agreeing that a *thing is good*, could it be obtained, such for instance as relief from a burden of taxes and the extinction of corruption, the object is more than half accomplished. What they approve as the end, they will promote in the means.

Will any man say in the present excess of taxation, falling so heavily on the poor, that a remission of five pounds annually of taxes to one hundred and four thousand poor families is not a *good thing* ? Will he say that a remission of seven pounds annually to one hundred thousand other poor families ; of eight

pounds annually to another hundred thousand poor families, and of ten pounds annually to fifty thousand poor and widowed families, are not *good things*? And, to proceed a step further in this climax, will he say, that to provide against the misfortunes to which all human life is subject, by securing six pounds annually for all poor, distressed, and reduced persons of the age of fifty and until sixty, and of ten pounds annually after sixty, is not a *good thing*?

Will he say, that an abolition of two millions of poor-rates to the housekeepers, and of the whole of the house and window-light tax and of the commutation tax is not a *good thing*? Or will he say, that to abolish corruption is a *bad thing*?

If, therefore, the good to be obtained be worthy of a passive, rational, and costless revolution, it would be bad policy to prefer waiting for a calamity that should force a violent one. I have no idea, considering the reforms which are now passing and spreading throughout Europe, that England will permit herself to be the last; and where the occasion and the opportunity quietly offer, it is better than to wait for a turbulent necessity. It may be considered as an honor to the animal faculties of man to obtain redress by courage and danger, but it is far greater honor to the rational faculties to accomplish the same object by reason, accommodation, and general consent.*

As reforms, or revolutions, call them which you please, extend themselves among nations, those nations will form connexions and conventions, and when a few are thus confederated, the progress will be rapid, till despotism and corrupt government be totally expelled, at least out of two quarters of the world, Europe

* I know it is the opinion of many of the most enlightened characters in France (there always will be those who see further into events than others,) not only among the general mass of citizens, but of many of the principal members of the national assembly, that the monarchical plan will not continue many years in that country. They have found out, that as wisdom cannot be hereditary, power ought not—and that for a man to merit a million sterling a-year from a nation, he ought to have a mind capable of comprehending from an atom to a universe, which, if he had, he would be above receiving the pay. But they wished not to appear to lead the nation faster than its own reason and interest dictated. In all the conversations where I have been present upon this subject, the idea always was, that when such a time, from the general opinion of the nation, shall arrive, that the honorable and liberal method would be, to make a handsome present in fee simple to the person, whoever he may be, that shall then be in the monarchical office, and for him to retire to the enjoyment of private life, possessing his share of general rights and privileges, and to be no more accountable to the public for his time and his conduct than any other citizen.

and America. The Algerine piracy may then be commanded to cease, for it is only by the malicious policy of old governments against each other that it exists.

Throughout this work, various and numerous as the subjects are, which I have taken up and investigated, there is only a single paragraph upon religion, viz. "*that every religion is good that teaches man to be good.*"

I have carefully avoided to enlarge upon the subject, because I am inclined to believe, that what is called the present ministry, wish to see contentions about religion kept up to prevent the nation turning its attention to subjects of government. It is as if they were to say, "*look that way, or any way but this.*"

But as religion is very improperly made a political machine, and the reality of it is thereby destroyed, I will conclude this work with stating in what light religion appears to me.

If we suppose a large family of children, who, on any particular day, or particular occasion, made it a custom to present to their parents some token of their affection and gratitude, each of them would make a different offering, and most probably in a different manner. Some would pay their congratulations in themes of verse and prose, by some little devices, as their genius dictated, or according to what they thought would please; and, perhaps, the least of all, not able to do any of those things, would ramble into the garden, or the field, and gather what it thought the prettiest flower it could find, though, perhaps, it might be but a simple weed. The parents would be more gratified by such a variety, than if the whole of them had acted on a concerted plan, and each had made exactly the same offering. This would have the cold appearance of contrivance, or the harsh one of control. But of all unwelcome things, nothing would more afflict the parent than to know, that the whole of them had afterwards gotten together by the ears, boys and girls, fighting, reviling, and abusing each other about which was the best or the worst present.

Why may we not suppose, that the great Father of all is pleased with variety of devotion; and that the greatest offence we can act, is that by which we seek to torment and render each other miserable? For my own part, I am fully satisfied that what I am now doing, with an endeavor to conciliate mankind, to render their condition happy, to unite nations that have hitherto been enemies, and to extirpate the horrid practice of war, and break the chains

of slavery and oppression, is acceptable in his sight, and being the best service I can perform, I act it cheerfully.

I do not believe that any two men, on what are called doctrinal points, think alike who think at all. It is only those who have not thought that appear to agree. It is in this case as with what is called the British constitution. It has been taken for granted to be good, and encomiums have supplied the place of proof. But when the nation comes to examine into principles and the abuses it admits, it will be found to have more defects than I have pointed out in this work and the former.

As to what are called national religions, we may, with as much propriety, talk of national gods. It is either political craft or the remains of the pagan system, when every nation had its separate particular deity. Among all the writers of the English church clergy, who have treated on the general subject of religion, the present bishop of Landaff has not been excelled, and it is with much pleasure that I take this opportunity of expressing this token of respect. I have now gone through the whole of the subject, at least, as far as it appears to me at present. It has been my intention for the five years I have been in Europe to offer an address to the people of England on the subject of government, if the opportunity presented itself before I returned to America. Mr. Burke has thrown it in my way, and I thank him. On a certain occasion, three years ago, I pressed him to propose a national convention, to be fairly elected, for the purpose of taking the state of the nation into consideration; but I found that however strongly the parliamentary current was then setting against the party he acted with, their policy was to keep every thing within that field of corruption, and trust to accidents. Long experience had shown that parliaments would follow any change of ministers, and on this they rested their hopes and their expectations.

Formerly, when divisions arose respecting governments, recourse was had to the sword, and a civil war ensued. That savage custom is exploded by the new system, and reference is had to national conventions. Discussion and the general will arbitrates the question, and to this, private opinion yields with a good grace, and order is preserved uninterrupted.

Some gentlemen have affected to call the principles upon which this work and the former part of the Rights of Man are founded,

‘a new-fangled doctrine.” The question is not whether these principles are new or old, but whether they are right or wrong. Suppose the former, I will show their effect by a figure easily understood.

It is now towards the middle of February. Were I to take a turn into the country, the trees would present a leafless, wintery appearance. As people are apt to pluck twigs as they go along, I perhaps might do the same, and by chance might observe, that a *single bud* on that twig had begun to swell. I should reason very unnaturally, or rather not reason at all, to suppose *this* was the *only* bud in England which had this appearance. Instead of deciding thus, I should instantly conclude, that the same appearance was beginning, or about to begin, every where ; and though the vegetable sleep will continue longer on some trees and plants than on others, and though some of them may not *blossom* for two or three years, all will be in leaf in the summer, except those which are *rotten*. What pace the political summer may keep with the natural, no human foresight can determine. It is, however, not difficult to perceive that the spring is begun. Thus wishing, as I sincerely do, freedom and happiness to all nations, I close the SECOND PART.



APPENDIX.

As the publication of this work has been delayed beyond the time intended, I think it not improper, all circumstances considered, to state the causes that have occasioned that delay.

The reader will probably observe, that some parts in the plan contained in this work for reducing the taxes, and certain parts in Mr. Pitt's speech at the opening of the present session, Tuesday, January 31, are so much alike, as to induce a belief, that either the author had taken the hint from Mr. Pitt, or Mr. Pitt from the author.—I will first point out the parts that are similar, and then state such circumstances as I am acquainted with, leaving the reader to make his own conclusion.

Considering it as almost an unprecedented case, that taxes should be proposed to be taken off, it is equally extraordinary that such a measure should occur to two persons at the same time ; and still more so (considering the vast variety and multiplicity of taxes) that they should hit on the same specific taxes. Mr. Pitt has mentioned, in his speech, the tax on *carts and wagons* ; that on *female servants* ; the lowering the tax on *candles* and the taking off the tax of three shillings on *houses* having under seven windows.

Every one of those specific taxes are a part of the plan contained in this work, and proposed also to be taken off. Mr. Pitt's plan, it is true, goes no further than to a reduction of three hundred and twenty thousand pounds ; and the reduction proposed in this work, to nearly six millions. I have made my calculations on only sixteen millions and an half of revenue, still asserting that it was very nearly, if not quite, seventeen millions. Mr. Pitt states it at 16,690,000*l*. I know enough of the matter to say, that he has not *overstated* it. Having thus given the particulars, which correspond in this work and his speech, I will state a chain of circumstances that may lead to some explanation.

The first hint for lessening the taxes, and that as a consequence flowing from the French revolution, is to be found in the Address and Declaration of the gentlemen who met at the Thatched-House tavern, August 20, 1791. Among many other particulars stated in that address, is the following, put as an interrogation to the government opposers of the French revolution. "*Are they sorry that the pretence for new oppressive taxes, and the occasion for continuing many old taxes will be at an end ?*"

It is well known, that the persons who chiefly frequent the Thatched-House tavern, are men of court connexions, and so much did they take this address and declaration respecting the French revolution, and the reduction of taxes, in disgust, that the landlord was under the necessity of informing the gentlemen, who composed the meeting of the 20th of August, and who proposed holding another meeting, that he could not receive them.*

* The gentleman who signed the address and declaration as chairman of the meeting, Mr. Horne Tooke, being generally supposed to be the person who drew it up, and having spoken much in commendation of it, has been jocularly accused of praising his own work. To free him from this embarrassment, and to save him the repeated trouble of mentioning the author, as he has not failed to do, I make no hesitation in saying, that as the opportuni-

What was only hinted in the address and declaration respecting taxes and principles of government, will be found reduced to a regular system in this work. But as Mr. Pitt's speech contains some of the same things respecting taxes, I now come to give the circumstances before alluded to.

The case is this : this work was intended to be published just before the meeting of parliament, and for that purpose a considerable part of the copy was put into the printer's hands in September, and all the remaining copy, as far as page 160, which contains the part to which Mr. Pitt's speech is similar, was given to him full six weeks before the meeting of parliament, and he was informed of the time at which it was to appear. He had composed nearly the whole about a fortnight before the time of parliament's meeting, and had printed as far as page 112, and had given me a proof of the next sheet, up to page 128. It was then in sufficient forwardness to be out at the time proposed, as two other sheets were ready for striking off. I had before told him, that if he thought he should be straitened for time, I could get part of the work done at another press, which he desired me not to do. In this manner the work stood on the Tuesday fortnight preceding the meeting of parliament, when all at once, without any previous intimation, though I had been with him the evening before, he sent me by one of his workmen, all the remaining copy, from page 112, declining to go on with the work *on any consideration*.

To account for this extraordinary conduct I was totally at a loss, as he stopped at the part where the arguments on systems and principles of government closed, and where the plan for the reduction of taxes, the education of children, and the support of the poor and the aged begins ; and still more especially, as he had, at the time of his beginning to print, and before he had seen the whole copy, offered a thousand pounds for the copy-right, together with the future copy-right of the former part of the Rights

ty of benefiting by the French revolution easily occurred to me, I drew up the publication in question, and showed it to him and some other gentlemen : who, fully approving it, held a meeting for the purpose of making it public, and subscribed to the amount of fifty guineas to defray the expense of advertising. I believe there are at this time in England a greater number of men acting on disinterested principles, and determined to look into the nature and practices of government themselves, and not blindly trust, as has hitherto been the case, either to government generally, or to parliaments, or to parliamentary opposition, than at any former period. Had this been done a century ago, corruption and taxation had not arrived to the height they are now at.

of Man. I told the person who brought me this offer that I should not accept it, and wished it not to be renewed, giving him as my reason, that though I believed the printer to be an honest man, I would never put it in the power of any printer or publisher to suppress or alter a work of mine, by making him master of the copy, or give to him the right of selling it to any minister, or to any other person, or to treat as a mere matter of traffic, that which I intended should operate as a principle.

His refusal to complete the work (which he could not purchase) obliged me to seek for another printer, and this of consequence would throw the publication back till after the meeting of parliament, otherwise it would have appeared that Mr. Pitt had only taken up a part of the plan which I had more fully stated.

Whether that gentleman, or any other, had seen the work or any part of it, is more than I have authority to say. But the manner in which the work was returned, and the particular time at which this was done, and that after the offers he had made, are suspicious circumstances. I know what the opinion of booksellers and publishers is upon such a case, but as to my own opinion, I choose to make no declaration. There are many ways by which proof sheets may be procured by other persons before a work publicly appears; to which I shall add a certain circumstance, which is,

A ministerial bookseller in Piccadilly who has been employed, as common report says, by a clerk of one of the boards closely connected with the ministry (the board of trade and plantations, of which Hawkesbury is president) to publish what he calls my *Life*, (I wish his own life and those of the cabinet were as good,) used to have his books printed at the same printing-office that I employed; but when the former part of the *Rights of Man* came out, he took his work away in dudgeon; and about a week or ten days before the printer returned my copy, he came to make him an offer of his work again, which was accepted. This would consequently give him admission into the printing-office where the sheets of this work were then lying; and as booksellers and printers are free with each other, he would have the opportunity of seeing what was going on. Be the case, however, as it may, Mr. Pitt's plan, little and diminutive as it is, would have made a very awkward appearance, had this work appeared at the time the printer had engaged to finish it.

I have now stated the particulars which occasioned the delay from the proposal to purchase, to the refusal to print. If all the gentlemen are innocent, it is very unfortunate for them that such a variety of suspicious circumstances should, without any design, arrange themselves together.

Having now finished this part, I will conclude with stating another circumstance.

About a fortnight or three weeks before the meeting of parliament, a small addition, amounting to about twelve shillings and sixpence a-year, was made to the pay of the soldiers, or rather their pay was docked so much less.—Some gentlemen who knew in part, that this work would contain a plan of reforms respecting the oppressed condition of soldiers, wished me to add a note to the work, signifying that the part upon that subject had been in the printer's hands some weeks before that addition of pay was proposed. I declined doing this, lest it should be interpreted into an air of vanity, or an endeavour to excite suspicion (for which perhaps there might be no grounds) that some of the government gentlemen had, by some means or other, made out what this work would contain; and had not the printing been interrupted so as to occasion a delay beyond the time fixed for publication, nothing contained in this appendix would have appeared.

THOMAS PAINE.

END OF THE RIGHTS OF MAN

TO THE

AUTHORS OF THE "REPUBLICAN."

GENTLEMEN,

M. DUCHASTELET has mentioned to me the intention of some persons to commence a work under the title of "The Republican."

As I am a citizen of a country which knows no other majesty than that of the people ; no other government than that of the representative body ; no other sovereignty than that of the laws, and which is attached to *France* both by alliance and by gratitude, I voluntarily offer you my services in support of principles as honorable to a nation as they are adapted to promote the happiness of mankind. I offer them to you with the more zeal, as I know the moral, literary, and political character of those who are engaged in the undertaking, and find myself honored in their good opinion.

But I must at the same time observe, that from ignorance of the French language, my works must necessarily undergo a translation ; they can of course be of but little utility, and my offering must consist more of wishes than services ; I must add, that I am obliged to pass a part of this summer in England and Ireland.

As the public has done me the unmerited favor of recognizing me under the appellation of Common Sense, which is my usual signature, I shall continue it in this publication to avoid mistakes, and to prevent my being supposed the author of works not my own. As to my political principles, I shall endeavor, in this letter, to trace their general features in such a manner, as that they cannot be misunderstood.

It is desirable in most instances to avoid that which may give even the least suspicion as to the part meant to be adopted, and particularly on the present occasion, where a perfect clearness of expression is necessary to the avoidance of any possible misinterpretation. I am happy, therefore, to find, that the work in question is entitled "The Republican." This word expresses perfectly the idea which we ought to have of government in general—*res-republica*—the public affairs of a nation.

As to the word *monarchy*, though the address and intrigue of courts have rendered it familiar, it does not contain the less of reproach or of insult to a nation. The word, in its immediate and original sense, signifies *the absolute power of a single individual*, who may prove a fool, an hypocrite, or a tyrant. The appellation admits of no other interpretation than that which is here given. France is therefore not a *monarchy*; it is insulted when called by that name. The servile spirit which characterizes this species of government is banished from France, and this country, like America, can now afford to monarchy no more than a glance of disdain.

Of the errors which monarchical ignorance or knavery has spread through the world, the one which bears the marks of the most dexterous invention, is the opinion that the system of *republicanism* is only adapted to a small country, and that a *monarchy* is suited, on the contrary, to those of greater extent. Such is the language of courts, and the sentiments which they have caused to be adopted in monarchical countries; but the opinion is contrary at the same time to principle and to experience.

The government, to be of real use, should possess a complete knowledge of all the parties, all the circumstances, and all the interests of a nation. The monarchical system, in consequence, instead of being suited to a country of great extent, would be more admissible in a small territory, where an individual may be supposed to know the affairs and the interests of the whole. But when it is attempted to extend this individual knowledge to the affairs of a great country, the capacity of knowing bears no longer any proportion to the extent or multiplicity of the objects which ought to be known, and the government inevitably falls from ignorance into tyranny. For the proof of this position we need only look to Spain, Russia, Germany, Turkey, and the whole of

the eastern continent.—Countries for the deliverance of which I offer my most sincere wishes.

On the contrary, the true *republican* system, by election and representation, offers the only means which are known, and, in my opinion, the only means which are possible, of proportioning the wisdom and the information of a government to the extent of a country.

The system of *representation* is the strongest and most powerful centre that can be devised for a nation. Its attraction acts so powerfully, that men give it their approbation even without reasoning on the cause ; and France, however distant its several parts, finds itself at this moment *a whole*, in its *central* representation. The citizen is assured that his rights are protected, and the soldier feels that he is no longer the slave of a despot, but that he is become one of the nation, and interested of course in its defence.

The states at present styled *republican*, as Holland, Genoa, Venice, Berne, &c. are not only unworthy the name, but are actually in opposition to every principle of a *republican* government, and the countries submitted to their power are, truly speaking, subject to an *aristocratic* slavery.

It is, perhaps, impossible, in the first steps which are made in a revolution, to avoid all kind of error, in principle or in practice, or in some instances to prevent the combination of both. Before the sense of a nation is sufficiently enlightened, and before men have entered into the habits of a free communication with each other of their natural thoughts, a certain reserve—a timid prudence seizes on the human mind, and prevents it from attaining its level—with that vigor and promptitude that belongs to *right*.—An example of this influence discovers itself in the commencement of the present revolution : but happily this discovery has been made before the constitution was completed, and in time to provide a remedy.

The *hereditary succession* can never exist as a matter of *right* ; it is a *nullity*—a *nothing*. To admit the idea, is to regard man as a species of property belonging to some individuals, either born or to be born ! It is to consider our descendants, and all posterity, as mere animals without a right or a will ! It is, in fine, the most base and humiliating idea that ever degraded the human

species, and which, for the honor of humanity, should be destroyed for ever.

The idea of hereditary succession is so contrary to the rights of man, that if we were ourselves to be recalled to existence, instead of being replaced by our posterity, we should not have the right of depriving ourselves beforehand of those rights which would then properly belong to us. On what ground, then, or by what authority, do we dare to deprive of their rights those children who will soon be men? Why are we not struck with the injustice which we perpetrate on our descendants, by endeavoring to transmit them as a vile herd, to masters whose vices are all that can be foreseen.

Whenever the French constitution shall be rendered conformable to its declaration of rights, we shall then be enabled to give to France, and with justice, the appellation of a *civic empire*; for its government will be the empire of laws, founded on the great republican principles of *elective representation*, and the rights of man.—But monarchy and hereditary succession are incompatible with the *basis* of its constitution.

I hope that I have at present sufficiently proved to you that I am a good republican; and I have such a confidence in the truth of the principles, that I doubt not they will soon be as universal in France as in America. The pride of human nature will assist their evidence, will contribute to their establishment, and men will be ashamed of monarchy.

I am, with respect,
Gentlemen,

Your friend,

THOMAS PAINE.

Paris. June. 1791

TO
ABBE SIEYES.

PARIS, 8th July, 1791.

SIR,

AT the moment of my departure for England, I read, in the *Moniteur* of Tuesday last, your letter, in which you give the challenge on the subject of government, and offer to defend what is called the *monarchical opinion* against the republican system.

I accept of your challenge with pleasure ; and I place such a confidence in the superiority of the republican system over that nullity of a system, called *monarchy*, that I engage not to exceed the extent of fifty pages, and to leave you the liberty of taking as much latitude as you may think proper.

The respect which I bear your moral and literary reputation, will be your security for my candor in the course of this discussion ; but, notwithstanding that I shall treat the subject seriously and sincerely, let me premise, that I consider myself at liberty to ridicule, as they deserve, monarchical absurdities, whensoever the occasion shall present itself.

By republicanism, I do not understand what the name signifies in Holland, and in some parts of Italy. I understand simply a government by representation—a government founded upon the principles of the declaration of rights ; principles to which several parts of the French constitution arise in contradiction. The declarations of the rights of France and America are but one and the same thing in principles, and almost in expressions ; and this is the republicanism which I undertake to defend against what is called *monarchy* and *aristocracy*.

I see with pleasure, that in respect to one point, we are already agreed ; and *that is the extreme danger of a civil list of thirty millions*. I can discover no reason why one of the parts of the government should be supported with so extravagant a profusion, whilst the other scarcely receives what is sufficient for its common wants.

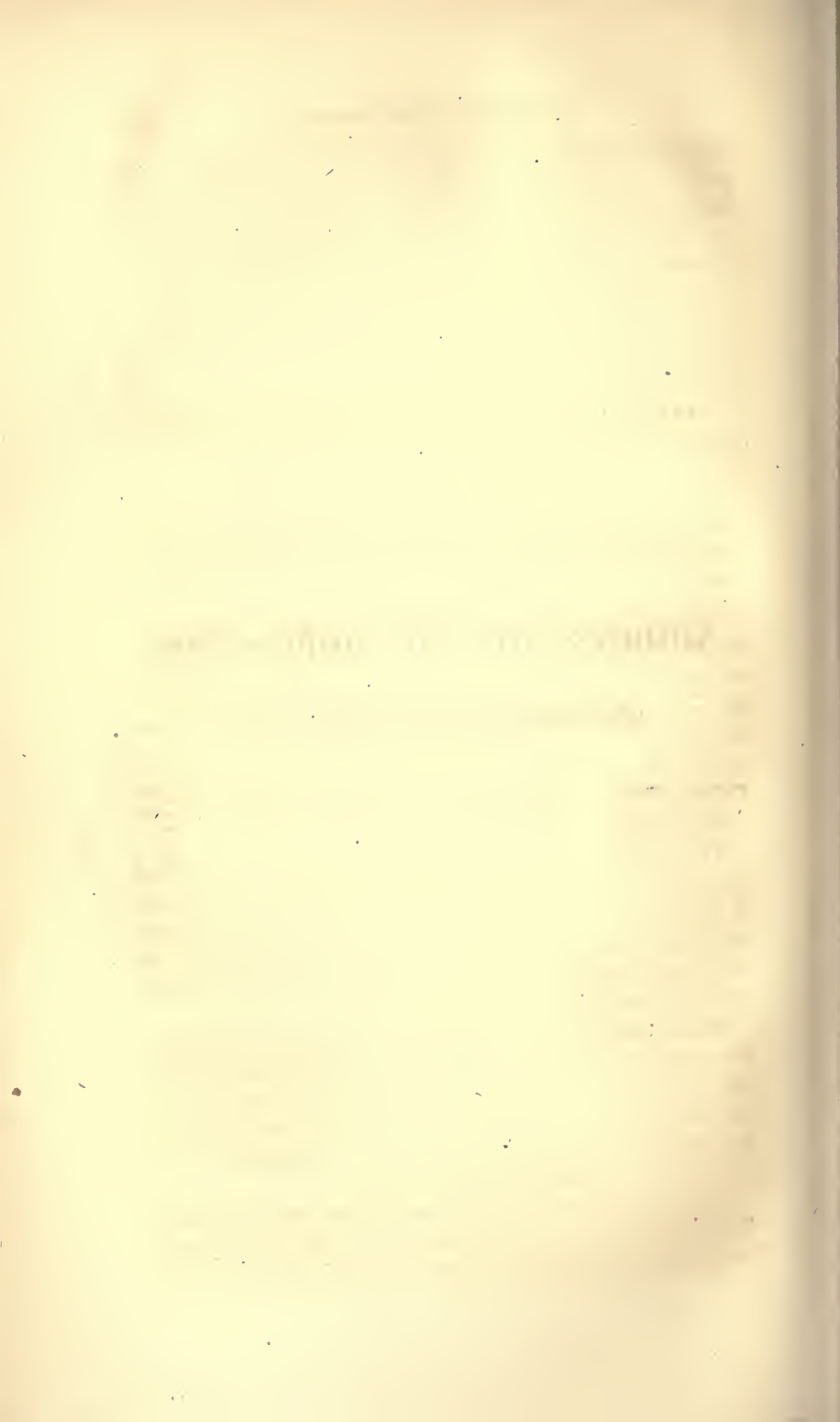
This dangerous and dishonorable disproportion at once supplies the one with the means of corrupting, and throws the other into the predicament of being corrupted. In America there is but little difference. with regard to this point, between the legislative and the executive part of our government ; but the first is much better attended to than it is in France.*

In whatsoever manner, sir, I may treat the subject of which you have proposed the investigation, I hope that you will not doubt my entertaining for you the highest esteem. I must also add, that I am not the personal enemy of kings. Quite the contrary. No man more heartily wishes than myself to see them all in the happy and honorable state of private individuals ; but I am the avowed, open, and intrepid enemy of what is called monarchy ; and I am such by principles which nothing can either alter or corrupt—by my attachment to humanity ; by the anxiety which I feel within myself, for the dignity and the honor of the human race ; by the disgust which I experience, when I observe men directed by children, and governed by brutes ; by the horror which all the evils that monarchy has spread over the earth excite within my breast ; and by those sentiments which make me shudder at the calamities, the exactions, the wars, and the massacres with which monarchy has crushed mankind : in short, it is against all the hell of monarchy that I have declared war.

THOMAS PAINE.

* A deputy to the congress receives about a guinea and a half daily : and provisions are cheaper in America than in France.

**ADDRESS TO THE ADDRESSERS,
ON THE LATE PROCLAMATION.**



ADDRESS TO THE ADDRESSERS.

COULD I have commanded circumstances with a wish, I know not of any that would have more generally promoted the progress of knowledge, than the late proclamation, and the numerous rotten-borough and corporation addresses thereon. They have not only served as advertisements, but they have excited a spirit of inquiry into principles of government, and a desire to read the Rights of Man, in places where that spirit and that work were before unknown.

The people of England, wearied and stunned with parties, and alternately deceived by each, had almost resigned the prerogative of thinking. Even curiosity had expired, and a universal languor had spread itself over the land. The opposition was visibly no other than a contest for power, whilst the mass of the nation stood torpidly by as the prize.

In this hopeless state of things, the first part of the Rights of Man made its appearance. It had to combat with a strange mixture of prejudice and indifference; it stood exposed to every species of newspaper abuse; and besides this, it had to remove the obstructions which Mr. Burke's rude and outrageous attack on the French revolution had artfully raised.

But how easy does even the most illiterate reader distinguish the spontaneous effusions of the heart, from the labored productions of the brain! Truth, whenever it can fully appear, is a

thing so naturally familiar to the mind, that an acquaintance commences at first sight. No artificial light, yet discovered, can display all the properties of daylight ; so neither can the best invented fiction fill the mind with every conviction which truth begets.

To overthrow Mr. Burke's fallacious book was scarcely the operation of a day. Even the phalanx of placemen and pensioners, who had given the tone to the multitude, by clamoring forth his political fame, became suddenly silent ; and the final event to himself has been, that as he rose like a rocket, he fell like the stick.

It seldom happens that the mind rests satisfied with the simple detection of error or imposition. Once put in motion, *that* motion soon becomes accelerated ; where it had intended to stop, it discovers new reasons to proceed, and renews and continues the pursuit far beyond the limits it first prescribed to itself. Thus it has happened to the people of England. From a detection of Mr. Burke's incoherent rhapsodies, and distorted facts, they began an inquiry into the first principles of government, whilst himself, like an object left far behind, became invisible and forgotten.

Much as the first part of the Rights of Man impressed at its first appearance, the progressive mind soon discovered that it did not go far enough. It detected errors ; it exposed absurdities ; it shook the fabric of political superstition ; it generated new ideas ; but it did not produce a regular system of principles in the room of those which it displaced. And, if I may guess at the mind of the government party, they beheld it as an unexpected gale that would soon blow over, and they forbore, like sailors in threatening weather, to whistle, lest they should increase the wind. Every thing, on their part, was profound silence.

When the second part of the Rights of man, *combining principles and practice*, was preparing to appear, they affected, for a while, to act with the same policy as before ; but finding their silence had no more influence in stifling the progress of the work, than it would have in stopping the progress of time, they changed their plan, and affected to treat it with clamorous contempt. The speech-making placemen and pensioners, and place expectants, in both houses of parliament, the *outs* as well as *ins*, represented it as a silly, insignificant performance ; as a work incapable of producing any effect ; as something which they were sure the good sense of the people would either despise or indignantly

spurn ; but such was the overstrained awkwardness with which they harangued and encouraged each other, that in the very act of declaring their confidence they betrayed their fears.

As most of the rotten-borough addressers are obscured in holes and corners throughout the country, and to whom a newspaper arrives as rarely as an almanac, they most probably have not had an opportunity of knowing how far this part of the farce (the original prelude to all the addresses) has been acted. For *their* information, I will suspend a while the more serious purpose of my letter, and entertain them with two or three speeches in the last session of parliament, which will serve them for politics till parliament meets again.

You must know, gentlemen, that the second part of the Rights of Man (the part against which you have been presenting addresses, though it is most probable that many of you did not know it) was to have come out precisely at the time that parliament last met. It happened not to be published till a few days after. But as it was well known that the book would shortly appear, the parliamentary orators entered into a very cordial coalition to cry the book down, and they began their attack by crying up the *blessings* of the constitution.

Had it been your fate to have been there, it would have been impossible not to have been moved at the heart-and-pocket-felt congratulations that passed between all the parties on this subject of *blessings* ; for the *outs* enjoy places and pensions and sinecures as well as the *ins*, and are as devoutly attached to the firm of the house.

One of the most conspicuous of this motley groupe, is the clerk of the court of king's bench, who calls himself lord Stormont. He is also called justice-general of Scotland, and keeper of Scoon, (an opposition man,) and he draws from the public for these nominal offices, not less, as I am informed, than six thousand pounds a-year, and he is, most probably, at the trouble of counting the money, and signing a receipt, to show, perhaps, that he is qualified to be clerk as well as justice. He spoke as follows.*

“That *we* shall *all* be unanimous in expressing *our* attachment to the constitution of these realms, *I am confident*. It is a sub-

* See his speech in the Morning Chronicle of Feb. 1.

ject upon which there can be *no* divided opinion *in this house*. I do not pretend to be deep read in the knowledge of the constitution, but I take upon me to say, that from the extent of *my* knowledge [for I have so many thousands a-year for nothing] it appears to *me* that from the period of the revolution, for it was by no means created then, it has been, both in *theory* and *practice*, the *wisest* system that ever was formed. I never was [he means he never was *till now*] a dealer in *political cant*. My life has not been occupied in *that way*, but the speculations of late years *seem to have taken a turn, for which I cannot account*. When I came into public life, the political pamphlets of the time, however they might be charged with the heat and violence of parties, were agreed in extolling the radical beauties of the constitution itself. I remember [he means he has forgotten] a most captivating eulogium on its *charms*, by lord Bolingbroke, where he recommends his readers to contemplate it in all respects, with the assurance that it would be found more estimable the more it was *seen*. I do *not recollect* his precise words, but I wish that men who write upon these subjects would take *this for their model*, instead of the political pamphlets, which, I am told, are now in circulation; [such, I suppose, as the Rights of Man,] pamphlets which I have *not read*, and whose purport I know only by *report*. [He means, perhaps, by the *noise* they make.] This, however, I am sure, that pamphlets tending to unsettle the public reverence for the constitution, will have very little influence. They can do very little harm; for [by the way, he is no dealer in political cant] *the English are a sober thinking people, and are more intelligent, more solid, more steady in their opinions, than any people I ever had the fortune to see*. [This is pretty well laid on, though, for a new beginner.] But if there should ever come a time when the propagation of those doctrines should agitate the public mind, I am *sure for every one* of your lordships, that no attack will be made on the constitution, from which it is truly said that *we* derive *all our* prosperity, without raising *every one* of your lordships to its support. It will then be found that there is no difference among *us*, but that *we* are *all* determined to *stand or fall together*, in defence of the inestimable system"—of places and pensions.

After Stormont, on the opposition side, sat down, up rose *another noble lord!* on the ministerial side, Grenville. This man

ought to be as strong in the back as a mule, or the *sire* of a mule, or it would crack with the weight of places and offices. He rose, however, without feeling any incumbrance, full master of his weight; and thus said *this* noble lord to *tother* noble lord!

“The *patriotic* and *manly* manner in which the noble lord has declared *his* sentiments on the subject of the constitution, demands *my cordial* approbation. The noble viscount has *proved*, that however we may differ on *particular measures*, amidst all the jars and dissonance of *parties*, we are unanimous in *principle*. There is a perfect and entire consent [between us] in the love and maintenance of the constitution as *happily subsisting*. It must undoubtedly give your lordships *concern*, to find that the *time is come*! [heigh ho!] when there is *propriety* in the expressions of regard to [o! o! o!] THE CONSTITUTION. And that there are men [confound—their—politics] who disseminate doctrines *hostile* to the *genuine spirit* of our *well-balanced system*. [It is certainly a well-balanced system, when both sides hold places and pensions at once.] I agree with the noble viscount that they have not [I hope] much success. I am convinced that there is no danger to be apprehended from their attempts: but it is *truly* important and *consolatory* [to us placemen, I suppose] to know, that if ever there should arise a serious alarm, there is but one *spirit*, one *sense* [and that sense I presume is not *common sense*] and one determination in *this house*”—which undoubtedly is to hold all their places and pensions as long as they can.

Both those speeches (except the parts enclosed in brackets, which are added for the purpose of *illustration*) are copied *verbatim* from the Morning Chronicle of the 1st of February last; and when the situation of the speakers is considered, the one in the opposition, and the other in the ministry, and both of them living at the public expense, by sinecure, or nominal places and offices, it required a very unblushing front to be able to deliver them. Can those men seriously suppose any nation to be so completely blind as not to see through them? Can Stormont imagine that the *political cant*, with which he has larded his harangue, will conceal the craft? Does he not know that there never was a cover large enough to conceal *itself*? Or can Grenville believe, that his credit with the public increases with his *avance* for places?

But, if these orators will accept a service from me, in return for the allusions they have made to the Rights of Man, I will make a speech for either of them to deliver, on the excellence of the constitution, that shall be as much to the purpose as what they have spoken, or as Bolingbroke's captivating eulogium. Here it is.

"That we shall all be unanimous in expressing our attachment to the constitution, I am confident. It is, my lords, incomprehensibly good : but the great wonder of all is the wisdom ; for it is, my lords, *the wisest system that ever was formed*.

"With respect to us, noble lords, though the world does not know it, it is very well known to us, that we have more wisdom than we know what to do with ; and what is still better, my lords, we have it all in stock. I defy your lordships to prove, that a tittle of it has been used yet ; and if we but go on, my lords, with the frugality we have hitherto done, we shall leave to our heirs and successors, when we go out of the world, the whole stock of wisdom *untouched*, that we brought in ; and there is no doubt but they will follow our example. This, my lords, is one of the blessed effects of the hereditary system : for we can never be without wisdom so long as we keep it by us, and do not use it.

"But, my lords, as all this wisdom is hereditary property, for the sole benefit of us and our heirs, and it is necessary that the people should know where to get a supply for their own use, the excellence of our constitution has provided us a king for this very purpose, and for *no other*. But, my lords, I perceive a defect to which the constitution is subject, and which I propose to remedy by bringing a bill into parliament for that purpose.

"The constitution, my lords, out of delicacy, I presume, has left it as a matter of *choice* to a king whether he will be wise or not. It has not, I mean, my lords, insisted upon it as a constitutional point, which, I conceive it ought to have done ; for I pledge myself to your lordships to prove, and that with *true patriotic boldness*, that he has *no choice in the matter*. This bill, my lords, which I shall bring in, will be to declare, that the constitution, according to the true intent and meaning thereof, does not invest the king with this choice ; our ancestors were too wise to do that ; and, in order to prevent any doubts that might otherwise arise, I shall prepare, my lords, an enacting clause, to fix the wisdom

of kings by act of parliament ; and then, my lords, our constitution will be the wonder of the world !

“ Wisdom, my lords, is the one thing needful : but that there may be no mistake in this matter, and that we may proceed consistently with the true wisdom of the constitution, I shall propose a *certain criterion* whereby the *exact quantity of wisdom* necessary for a king may be known.—[Here should be a cry of—Hear him ! Hear him !]

“ It is recorded, my lords, in the Statutes at large of the Jews, ‘ a book, my lords, which I have not read, and whose purport I know only by report,’ but *perhaps the bench of bishops can recollect something about it*, that Saul gave the most convincing proofs of royal wisdom before he was made a king, *for he was sent to seek his father’s asses and he could not find them*.

“ Here, my lords, we have, most happily for us, a case in point : this precedent ought to be established by act of parliament ; and every king, before he be crowned, should be sent to seek his father’s asses, and if he cannot find them, he shall be declared wise enough to be king, according to the true meaning of our excellent constitution. All, therefore, my lords, that will be necessary to be done, by the enacting clause that I shall bring in, will be to invest the king beforehand with the quantity of wisdom necessary for this purpose, lest he should happen not to possess it ; and this, my lords, we can do without making use of any of our own.

“ We further read, my lords, in the said Statutes at large of the Jews, that Samuel, who certainly was as mad as any man-of-rights now-a-days, (hear him ! hear him !) was displeased, and even exasperated, at the proposal of the Jews to have a king, and he warned them against it with all that assurance and impudence of which he was master. I have been, my lords, at the trouble of going all the way to Paternoster-row, to procure an extract from the printed copy. I was told that I should meet with it there, or in Amen-corner, for I was then going, my lords, to rummage for it among the curiosities of the Antiquarian society. I will read the extract to your lordships, to show how little Samuel knew of the matter.

“ The extract, my lords, is from 1 Sam. chap. viii.

“ ‘ And Samuel told all the words of the Lord unto the people that asked of him a king.

“ ‘ And he said, This will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you. He will take your sons and appoint them for himself, for his chariots, and to be his horsemen ; and some shall run before his chariots.

“ ‘ And he will appoint him captains over thousands, and captains over fifties, and will set them to ear his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and instruments of his chariots.

“ ‘ And he will take your daughters to be confectionaries, and to be cooks, and to be bakers.

“ ‘ And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your olive-yards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants.

“ ‘ And he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give to his officers, and to his servants.

“ ‘ And he will take your men-servants, and your maid-servants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put them to his work.

“ ‘ And he will take the tenth of your sheep, and ye shall be his servants.

“ ‘ And ye shall cry out in that day, because of your king, which ye shall have chosen you ; and the lord will not hear you in that day.’ ”

“ Now, my lords, what can we think of this man Samuel ? Is there a word of truth, or any thing like truth, in all that he has said ? He pretended to be a prophet, or a wise man, but has not the event proved him to be a fool, or an incendiary ? Look around you, my lords, and see if any thing has happened that he pretended to foretel ?—Has not the most profound peace reigned throughout the world ever since kings were in fashion ? Are not, for example, the present kings of Europe the most peaceable of mankind, and the empress of Russia the very milk of human kindness ? It would not be worth having kings, my lords, if it were not that they never go to war.

“ If we look at home, my lords, do we not see the same things here as are seen every where else ? Are our young men taken to be horsemen, or foot soldiers, any more than in Germany or in Prussia, or in Hanover or in Hesse ? Are not our sailors as safe on land as at sea ? Are they ever dragged from their homes, like oxen to the slaughter-house, to serve on board ships of war ? When they return from the perils of a long voyage with the

merchandize of distant countries, does not every man sit down under his own vine and his own fig-tree, in perfect security? Is the tenth of our seed taken by tax-gatherers, or is any part of it given to the king's servants? In short, *is not every thing as free from taxes as the light from Heaven?*

"Ah! my lords, do we not see the blessed effect of having kings in every thing we look at? Is not the G. R., or the broad R., stamped upon every thing? Even the shoes, the gloves, and the hats that we wear, are enriched with the impression, and all our candles blaze a burnt-offering.

"Besides these blessings, my lords, that cover us from the sole of the foot to the crown of the head, do we not see a race of youths growing up to be kings, who are the very paragons of virtue? There is not one of them, my lords, but might be trusted with untold gold, as safely as the other. Are they not '*more sober, intelligent, more solid, more steady,*' and withal, more learned, more wise, more every thing, than any youths '*we ever had the fortune to see.*' Ah! my lords, they are a *hopeful family*.

"The blessed prospect of succession, which the nation has at this moment before its eyes, is a most undeniable proof of the excellence of our constitution, and of the blessed hereditary system; for nothing, my lords, but a constitution founded on the truest and purest wisdom could admit such heaven-born and heaven-taught characters into the government. Permit me now, my lords, to recal your attention to the libellous chapter I have just read about kings. I mention this, my lords, because it is my intention to move for a bill to be brought into parliament to expunge that chapter from the Bible, and that the lord chancellor, with the assistance of the prince of Wales, the duke of York, and the duke of Clarence, be requested to write a chapter in the room of it; and that Mr. Burke do see that it be truly canonical, and faithfully inserted."—*Finis*.

If the clerk of the court of king's bench should choose to be the author of this luminous encomium on the constitution, I hope he will get it well by heart before he attempts to deliver it, and not have to apologize to parliament, as he did in the case of Bolingbroke's encomium, for forgetting his lesson; and, with this admonition I leave him.

Having thus informed the addressers of what passed at the meeting of parliament, I return to take up the subject at the

part where I broke off, in order to introduce the preceding speeches.

I was then stating, that the first policy of the government party was silence, and the next, clamorous contempt ; but as people generally choose to read and judge for themselves, the work still went on, and the affectation of contempt, like the silence that preceded it, passed for nothing.

Thus foiled in their second scheme, their evil genius, like a will-with-a-wisp, led them to a third ; when all at once, as if it had been unfolded to them by a fortune-teller, or Mr. Dundas had discovered it by second sight, this once harmless, insignificant book, without undergoing the alteration of a single letter, became a most wicked and dangerous libel. The whole cabinet, like a ship's crew, became alarmed ; all hands were piped upon deck, as if a conspiracy of elements was forming around them, and out came the proclamation and the prosecution ; and addresses supplied the place of prayers.

Ye silly swains, thought I to myself, why do you torment yourselves thus ? The Rights of Man is a book calmly and rationally written ; why then are you so disturbed ? Did you see how little or how suspicious such conduct makes you appear, even cunning alone, had you no other faculty, would hush you into prudence. The plans, principles, and arguments, contained in that work, are placed before the eyes of the nation, and of the world, in a fair, open, and manly manner, and nothing more is necessary than to refute them. Do this, and the whole is done ; but if ye cannot, so neither can ye suppress the reading, nor convict the author ; for the law, in the opinion of all good men, would convict itself, that should condemn what cannot be refuted.

Having now shown the addressers the several stages of the business, prior to their being called upon, like Cæsar in the Tiber, crying to Cassius, "*help, Cassius, or I sink !*" I next come to remark on the policy of the government, in promoting addresses ; on the consequences naturally resulting therefrom ; and on the conduct of the persons concerned.

With respect to the policy, it evidently carries with it every mark and feature of disguised fear. And it will hereafter be placed in the history of extraordinary things, that a pamphlet should be produced by an individual, unconnected with any sect or party, and not seeking to make any, and almost a stranger in

the land, that should completely frighten a whole government, and that in the midst of its triumphant security. Such a circumstance cannot fail to prove, that either the pamphlet has irresistible powers, or the government very extraordinary defects, or both. The nation exhibits no signs of fear at the Rights of Man ; why then should the government, unless the interest of the two are really opposite to each other, and the secret is beginning to be known ? That there are two distinct classes of men in the nation, those who pay taxes, and those who receive and live upon the taxes, is evident at first sight ; and when taxation is carried to excess, it cannot fail to disunite those two, and something of this kind is now beginning to appear.

It is also curious to observe, amidst all the fume and bustle about proclamations and addresses, kept up by a few noisy and interested men, how little the mass of the nation seem to care about either. They appear to me, by the indifference they show, not to believe a word the proclamation contains ; and as to the addresses, they travel to London with the silence of a funeral, and having announced their arrival in the Gazette, are deposited with the ashes of their predecessors, and Mr. Dundas writes their *hic jacent*.

One of the best effects which the proclamation, and its echo the addresses have had, has been that of exciting and spreading curiosity ; and it requires only a single reflection to discover, that the object of all curiosity is knowledge. When the mass of the nation saw that placemen, pensioners, and borough-mongers, were the persons that stood forward to promote addresses, it could not fail to create suspicions that the public good was not their object ; that the character of the books, or writings, to which such persons obscurely alluded, not daring to mention them, was directly contrary to what they described them to be, and that it was necessary that every man, for his own satisfaction, should exercise his proper right, and read and judge for himself.

But how will the persons who have been induced to read the Rights of Man, by the clamor that has been raised against it, be surprised to find, that, instead of a wicked, inflammatory work, instead of a licentious and profligate performance, it abounds with principles of government that are uncontrovertible—with arguments which every reader will feel, are unanswerable—with plans for the increase of commerce and manufactures—for the extinc-

tion of war—for the education of the children of the poor—for the comfortable support of the aged and decayed persons of both sexes—for the relief of the army and navy, and, in short, for the promotion of every thing that can benefit the moral, civil, and political condition of man.

Why, then, some calm observer will ask, why is the work prosecuted, if these be the goodly matters it contains? I will tell thee, friend; it contains also a plan for the reduction of taxes, for lessening the immense expenses of government, for abolishing places and pensions; and it proposes applying the redundant taxes, that shall be saved by these reforms, to the purposes mentioned in the former paragraph, instead of applying them to the support of idle and profligate placemen and pensioners.

Is it, then, any wonder that placemen and pensioners, and the whole train of court expectants, should become the promoters of addresses, proclamations, and prosecutions? Or, is it any wonder that corporations and rotten-boroughs, which are attacked and exposed, both in the first and second parts of the Rights of Man, as unjust monopolies and public nuisances, should join in the cavalcade? Yet these are the sources from which addresses have sprung. Had not such persons come forward to oppose the Rights of Man, I should have doubted the efficacy of my own writings: but those opposers have now proved to me, that the blow was well directed, and they have done it justice by confessing the smart.

The principal deception in this business of addresses has been, that the promoters of them have not come forward in their proper characters. They have assumed to pass themselves upon the public, as a part of the public, bearing a share of the burden of taxes, and acting for the public good; whereas, they are in general that part of it that adds to the public burden, by living on the produce of the public taxes. They are to the public what the locusts are to the tree: the burden would be less, and the prosperity would be greater, if they were shaken off.

“I do not come here,” said Onslow, at the Surry county meeting, “as the lord lieutenant and custos rotulorum of the county, but I come here as a plain country gentleman.” The fact is, that he came there as what he was, and as no other, and consequently he came as one of the class I have been describing. If it be the character of a gentleman to be fed by the public, as a

pauper is by the parish, Onslow has a fair claim to the title ; and the same description will suit the duke of Richmond, who led the address at the Sussex meeting. He also may set up for a gentleman.

As to the meeting in the next adjoining county, (Kent,) it was a scene of disgrace. About two hundred persons met, when a small part of them drew privately away from the rest, and voted an address : the consequence of which was that they got together by the ears, and produced a riot in the very act of producing an address to prevent riots.

That the proclamation and the addresses have failed of their intended effect, may be collected from the silence which the government party itself observes. The number of addresses has been weekly retailed in the Gazette ; but the number of addressers has been concealed. Several of the addresses have been voted by not more than ten or twelve persons ; and a considerable number of them by not more than thirty. The whole number of addresses presented at the time of writing this letter is three hundred and twenty, (rotten-boroughs and corporations included,) and even admitting, on an average, one hundred addressers to each address, the whole number of addressers would be but thirty-two thousand, and nearly three months have been taken up in procuring this number. That the success of the proclamation has been less than the success of the work it was intended to discourage, is a matter within my own knowledge ; for a greater number of the cheap edition of the first and second parts of the Rights of Man has been sold in the space of one month, than the whole number of addressers (admitting them to be thirty-two thousand) have amounted to in three months.

It is a dangerous attempt in any government to say to a nation, "*thou shalt not read.*" This is now done in Spain, and was formerly done under the old government of France ; but it served to procure the downfall of the latter, and is subverting that of the former ; and it will have the same tendency in all countries ; because *thought* by some means or other, is got abroad in the world, and cannot be restrained, though reading may.

If the Rights of Man were a book that deserved the vile description which the promoters of the addresses have given of it. why did not these men prove their charge, and satisfy the people, by producing it, and reading it publicly ? This most certainly

ought to have been done, and would also have been done, had they believed it would have answered their purpose. But the fact is, that the book contains truths, which those time-servers dreaded to hear, and dreaded that the people should know; and it is now following up the addresses in every part of the nation, and convicting them of falsehoods.

Among the unwarrantable proceedings to which the proclamation has given rise, the meetings of the justices in several of the towns and counties ought to be noticed. Those men have assumed to re-act the farce of general warrants, and to suppress by their own authority, whatever publications they please. This is an attempt at power, equalled only by the conduct of the minor despots of the most despotic governments in Europe, and yet those justices affect to call England a free country. But even this, perhaps, like the scheme for garrisoning the country, by building military barracks, is necessary to awaken the country to a sense of its rights, and, as such, it will have a good effect.

Another part of the conduct of such justices has been, that of threatening to take away the licenses from taverns and public-houses, where the inhabitants of the neighborhood associated to read and discuss the principles of government, and to inform each other thereon. This, again, is similar to what is doing in Spain and Russia; and the reflection which it cannot fail to suggest is, that the principles and conduct of any government must be bad, when that government dreads and startles at discussion, and seeks security by a prevention of knowledge.

If the government, or the constitution, or by whatever name it be called, be that miracle of perfection which the proclamation and the addresses have trumpeted it forth to be, it ought to have defied discussion and investigation, instead of dreading it. Whereas, every attempt it makes, either by proclamation, persecution, or address, to suppress investigation, is a confession that it feels itself unable to bear it. It is error only, and not truth, that shrinks from inquiry. All the numerous pamphlets, and all the newspaper falsehood and abuse, that have been published against the Rights of Man, have fallen before it like pointless arrows; and, in like manner, would any work have fallen before the constitution, had the constitution, as it is called, been founded on as good political principles as those on which the Rights of Man is written.

It is a good constitution for courtiers, placemen, pensioners, borough-holders, and the leaders of parties, and these are the men that have been the active leaders of addresses ; but it is a bad constitution for at least ninety-nine parts of the nation out of an hundred, and this truth is every day making its way.

It is bad, first, because it entails upon the nation the unnecessary expense of supporting three forms and systems of government at once, namely, the monarchical, the aristocratical, and the democratical.

Secondly, because it is impossible to unite such a discordant composition by any other means than perpetual corruption ; and therefore the corruption so loudly and so universally complained of, is no other than the natural consequence of such an unnatural compound of governments ; and in this consists that excellence which the numerous herd of placemen and pensioners so loudly extol, and which at the same time, occasions that enormous load of taxes under which the rest of the nation groans.

Among the mass of national delusions, calculated to amuse and impose upon the multitude, the standing one has been that of flattering them into taxes, by calling the government (or as they please to express it, the English constitution) "*the envy and admiration of the world.*" Scarcely an address has been voted in which some of the speakers have not uttered this hackneyed, nonsensical falsehood.

Two revolutions have taken place, those of America and France, and both of them have rejected the unnatural compounded system of the English government ; America has declared against all hereditary government, and established the representative system of government only. France has entirely rejected the aristocratical part, and is now discovering the absurdity of the monarchical, and is approaching fast to the representative system. On what ground then, do these men continue a declaration, respecting what they call the *envy and admiration of other nations*, which the voluntary practice of such nations, as have had the opportunity of establishing governments, contradicts and falsifies ? Will such men never confine themselves to truth ? Will they be for ever the deceivers of the people ?

But I will go further, and show, that were government now to begin in England, the people could not be brought to establish the same system they now submit to.

In speaking on this subject (or on any other) *on the pure ground of principle*, antiquity and precedent cease to be authority, and hoary-headed error loses its effect. The reasonableness and propriety of things must be examined abstractedly from custom and usage ; and, in this point of view, the right which grows into practice to-day is as much a right, and as old in principle and theory, as if it had the customary sanction of a thousand ages. Principles have no connexion with time, nor characters with names.

To say that the government of this country is composed of king, lords, and commons, is the mere phraseology of custom. It is composed of men ; and whoever the men be to whom the government of any country is intrusted, they ought to be the best and wisest that can be found ; and if they are not so, they are not fit for the station. A man derives no more excellence from the change of a name, or calling him king, or calling him lord, than I should do by changing my name from Thomas to George, or from Paine to Guelph. I should not be a whit more able to write a book because my name was altered ; neither would any man, now called a king, or a lord, have a whit the more sense than he now has, were he to call himself Thomas Paine.

As to the word "commons," applied as it is in England, it is a term of degradation and reproach, and ought to be abolished. It is a term unknown in free countries.

But to the point. Let us suppose that government was now to begin in England, and that the plan of government, offered to the nation for its approbation or rejection, consisted of the following parts :

1st, That some one individual should be taken from all the rest of the nation, and to whom all the rest should swear obedience, and never be permitted to sit down in his presence, and that they should give him one million sterling a-year. That the nation should never after have power or authority to make laws but with his express consent, and that his sons, and his sons' sons, whether wise or foolish, good men or bad, fit or unfit, should have the same power, and also the same money annually paid to them for ever.

2d, That there should be two houses of legislators to assist in making laws, one of which should, in the first instance, be entirely appointed by the aforesaid person, and that their sons and their sons' sons, whether wise or foolish, good men or bad, fit or unfit, should for ever after be hereditary legislators.

3d, That the other house should be chosen in the same manner as the house now called the house of commons is chosen, and should be subject to the control of the two aforesaid hereditary powers in all things.

It would be impossible to cram such a farrago of imposition and absurdity down the throat of this or any other nation that was capable of reasoning upon its rights and its interest.

They would ask, in the first place, on what ground of right, or on what principle, such irrational and preposterous distinctions could, or ought to be made; and what pretensions any man could have, or what services he could render, to entitle him to a million a-year? They would go further, and revolt at the idea of consigning their children and their children's children, to the domination of persons hereafter to be born, who might, for any thing they could foresee, turn out to be knaves or fools; and they would finally discover, that the project of hereditary governors and legislators *was a treasonable usurpation over the rights of posterity*. Not only the calm dictates of reason, and the force of natural affection, but the integrity of manly pride, would impel men to spurn such proposals.

From the grosser absurdities of such a scheme, they would extend their examination to the practical defects; they would soon see that it would end in tyranny, accomplished by fraud. That in the operation of it, it would be two to one against them, because the two parts that were to be made hereditary, would form a common interest, and stick to each other; and that themselves and representatives would become no better than hewers of wood and drawers of water for the other parts of the government. Yet call one of those powers king, the other lords, and the third the commons, and it gives the model of what is called the English government.

I have asserted, and have shown, both in the first and second parts of the Rights of Man, that there is no such thing as an English constitution, and that the people have yet a constitution to form. *A constitution is a thing antecedent to a government; it is the act of the people creating a government and giving it powers, and defining the limits and exercise of the powers so given.* But when did the people of England, acting in their original constituent character, by a delegation elected for that express purpose, declare and say, "*We, the people of this land, do constitute and ap-*

point this to be our system and form of government?" The government has assumed to constitute itself, but it never was constituted by the people, in whom alone the right of constituting resides.

I will here recite the preamble to the federal constitution of the United States of America. I have shown in the second part of the Rights of Man, the manner by which the constitution was formed and afterwards ratified ; and to which I refer the reader. The preamble is in the following words:

"WE, THE PEOPLE, of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, DO ORDAIN AND ESTABLISH THIS CONSTITUTION for the United States of America."

Then follow the several articles which appoint the manner in which the several component parts of the government, legislative and executive, shall be elected, and the period of their duration, and the powers they shall have : also, the manner by which future additions, alterations, or amendments, shall be made to the constitution. Consequently, every improvement that can be made in the science of government, follows in that country as a matter of order. It is only in governments founded on assumption and false principles, that reasoning upon, and investigating systems and principles of government, and showing their several excellencies and defects, are termed libellous and seditious. These terms were made part of the charge brought against Locke, Hampden, and Sydney, and will continue to be brought against all good men, so long as bad governments shall continue.

The government of this country has been ostentatiously giving challenges for more than an hundred years past, upon what is called its own excellence and perfection. Scarcely a king's speech, or a parliamentary speech, has been uttered, in which this glove has not been thrown, till the world has been insulted with their challenges. But it now appears that all this was vapor and vain-boasting, or that it was intended to conceal abuses and defects, and hush the people into taxes. I have taken the challenge up, and in behalf of the public have shown, in a fair open,

and candid manner, both the radical and practical defects of the system ; when, lo ! those champions of the civil list have fled away, and sent the attorney-general to deny the challenge, by turning the acceptance of it into an attack, and defending their places and pensions by a prosecution.

I will here drop this part of the subject, and state a few particulars respecting the prosecution now pending, by which the addressers will see that they have been used as tools to the prosecuting party and their dependants. The case is as follows :

The original edition of the first and second parts of the Rights of Man, having been expensively printed, (in the modern style of printing pamphlets, that they might be bound up with Mr. Burke's reflections on the French revolution,) the high price precluded the generality of people from purchasing ; and many applications were made to me from various parts of the country to print the work in a cheaper manner. The people of Sheffield requested leave to print two thousand copies for themselves, with which request I immediately complied. The same request came to me from Rotherham, from Leicester, from Chester, from several towns in Scotland ; and Mr. James Macintosh, author of *Vindiciæ Gallicæ*, brought me a request from Warwickshire, for leave to print ten thousand copies in that county. I had already sent a cheap edition to Scotland ; and finding the applications increase, I concluded that the best method of complying therewith, would be to print a very numerous edition in London, under my own direction, by which means the work would be more perfect, and the price be reduced lower than it could be by printing small editions in the country, of only a few thousands each.

The cheap edition of the first part was begun about the first of last April, and from that moment, and not before, I expected a prosecution, and the event has proved that I was not mistaken. I had then occasion to write to Mr. Thomas Walker of Manchester, and after informing him of my intention of giving up the work for the purpose of general information, I informed him of what I apprehended would be the consequence ; that while the work was at a price that precluded an extensive circulation, the government party, not able to controvert the plans, arguments, and principles it contained, had chosen to remain silent ; but that I expected they would make an attempt to deprive the mass of the nation,

and especially the poor, of the right of reading, by the pretence of prosecuting either the author or the publisher, or both. They chose to begin with the publisher.

Nearly a month, however, passed, before I had any information given me of their intentions. I was then at Bromley, in Kent, upon which I came immediately to town, (May 14) and went to Mr. Jordan, the publisher of the original edition. He had that evening been served with a summons to appear at the court of king's bench on the Monday following, but for what purpose was not stated. Supposing it to be on account of the work, I appointed a meeting with him on the next morning, which was accordingly had, when I provided an attorney, and took the expense of the defence on myself. But finding afterwards that he absented himself from the attorney employed, and had engaged another, and that he had been closeted with the solicitors of the treasury, I left him to follow his own choice, and he chose to plead guilty. This he might do if he pleased; and I make no objection against him for it. I believe that his idea by the word *guilty*, was no other than declaring himself to be the publisher, without any regard to the merits or demerits of the work; for were it to be construed otherwise, it would amount to the absurdity of converting a publisher into a jury, and his confession into a verdict upon the work itself. This would be the highest possible refinement upon packing of juries.

On the 21st of May, they commenced their prosecution against me, as the author, by leaving a summons at my lodgings in town, to appear at the court of king's bench on the 8th of June following; and on the same day, (May 21,) *they issued also their proclamation*. Thus the court of St. James and the court of king's bench, were playing into each other's hands at the same instant of time, and the farce of addresses brought up the rear; and this mode of proceeding is called by the prostituted name of law. Such a thundering rapidity, after a ministerial dormancy of almost a year and an half, can be attributed to no other cause than their having gained information of the forwardness of the cheap edition, and the dread they felt at the progressive increase of political knowledge.

I was strongly advised by several gentlemen, as well those in the practice of the law, as others, to prefer a bill of indictment against the publisher of the proclamation, as a publication tending

to influence, or rather to dictate the verdict of a jury on the issue of a matter then pending; but it appeared to me much better to avail myself of the opportunity which such a precedent justified me in using, by meeting the proclamation and the addressers on their own ground, and publicly defending the work which had been thus unwarrantably attacked and traduced. And conscious as I now am, that the work entitled Rights of Man, so far from being, as has been maliciously or erroneously represented, a false, wicked, and seditious libel, is a work abounding with unanswerable truths, with principles of the purest morality and benevolence, and with arguments not to be controverted. Conscious, I say, of these things, and having no object in view but the happiness of mankind, I have now put the matter to the best proof in my power, by giving to the public a cheap edition of the first and second parts of that work. Let every man read and judge for himself, not only of the merits and demerits of the work, but of the matters therein contained, which relate to his own interest and happiness.

If, to expose the fraud and imposition of monarchy, and every species of hereditary government; to lessen the oppression of taxes; to propose plans for the education of helpless infancy, and the comfortable support of the aged and distressed; to endeavor to conciliate nations to each other; to extirpate the horrid practice of war; to promote universal peace, civilization, and commerce; and to break the chains of political superstition, and raise degraded man to his proper rank;—if these things be libellous, let me live the life of a libeller, and let the name of *libeller* be engraved on my tomb.

Of all the weak and ill-judged measures which fear, ignorance, or arrogance could suggest, the proclamation, and the project for addresses are the two worst. They served to advertise the work which the promoters of those measures wished to keep unknown; and in doing this they offered violence to the judgment of the people, by calling on them to condemn what they forbade them to know; and put the strength of their party to that hazardous issue that prudence would have avoided. The county meeting for Middlesex was attended by only one hundred and eighteen addressers. They, no doubt, expected, that thousands would flock to their standard, and clamor against the Rights of Man. But the case most probably is, that men are not so blind to their rights and their interests, as governments believe.

Having thus shown the extraordinary manner in which the government party commenced their attack, I proceed to offer a few observations on the prosecution, and on the mode of trial by special jury.

In the first place I have written a book ; and if it cannot be refuted, it cannot be condemned. But I do not consider the prosecution as particularly levelled against me, but against the general right, or the right of every man, of investigating systems and principles of government, and showing their several excellencies or defects. If the press be free only to flatter government, as Burke has done, and to cry up and extol what certain court sycophants are pleased to call a "glorious constitution," and not free to examine into its errors or abuses, or whether a constitution really exist or not, such freedom is no other than that of Spain, Turkey, or Russia ; and a jury in this case, would not be a jury to try, but an inquisition to condemn.

I have asserted, and by fair and open argument maintained, the right of every nation at all times to establish such a system and form of government for itself as best accords with its disposition, interest, and happiness ; and to change and alter it as it sees occasion. Will any jury deny to the nation this right ? If they do, they are traitors, and their verdict would be null and void. And if they admit the right, the means must be admitted also ; for it would be the highest absurdity to say, that the right existed, but the means did not. The question then is, What are the means by which the possession and exercise of this national right are to be secured ? The answer will be, that of maintaining, inviolably, the right of investigation ; for investigation always serves to detect error, and to bring forth truth.

I have, as an individual, given my opinion upon what I believe to be not only the best, but the true system of government, which is the representative system, and I have given reasons for that opinion.

1st, Because in the representative system, no office of very extraordinary power, or extravagant pay, is attached to any individual ; and consequently there is nothing to excite those national contentions and civil wars, with which countries under monarchical governments are frequently convulsed, and of which the history of England exhibits such numerous instances.

2d, Because the representative is a system of government always in maturity; whereas monarchical government fluctuates through all the stages, from nonage to dotage.

3d, Because the representative system admits of none but men, properly qualified, into the government, or removes them if they prove to be otherwise. Whereas, in the hereditary system, a nation may be encumbered with a knave or an idiot for a whole life-time, and not be benefited by a successor.

4th, Because there does not exist a right to establish hereditary government; or, in other words, hereditary successors; because hereditary government always means a government yet to come, and the case always is, that those who are to live afterwards have the same right to establish government for themselves, as the people had who lived before them; and, therefore, all laws attempting to establish hereditary government, are founded on assumption and political fiction.

If these positions be truths, and I challenge any man to prove the contrary; if they tend to instruct and enlighten mankind, and to free them from error, oppression, and political superstition, which are the objects I have in view in publishing them, that jury would commit an act of injustice to their country, and to me, if not an act of perjury, that should call them *false, wicked, and malicious*.

Dragonetti, in his treatise, On Virtues and Rewards, has a paragraph worthy of being recorded in every country in the world—"The science, says he, of the politician, consists in fixing the true point of happiness and freedom. Those men deserve the gratitude of ages, who should discover a mode of government that contained the greatest sum of *individual happiness* with the least *national expense*." But if juries are to be made use of to prohibit inquiry, to suppress truth, and to stop the progress of knowledge, this boasted palladium of liberty becomes the most successful instrument of tyranny.

Among the arts practised at the bar, and from the bench, to impose upon the understanding of a jury, and to obtain a verdict where the consciences of men could not otherwise consent, one of the most successful has been that of calling truth a libel, and of insinuating, that the words "*falsely, wickedly, and maliciously*" though they are made the formidable and high sounding part of the charge, are not matters of consideration with a jury. For

what purpose, then, are they retained, unless it be for that of imposition and wilful defamation?

I cannot conceive a greater violation of order, nor a more abominable insult upon morality, and upon human understanding, than to see a man sitting in the judgment seat, affecting, by an antiquated foppery of dress, to impress the audience with awe; then causing witnesses and jury to be sworn to truth and justice, himself having officially sworn the same; then causing to be read a prosecution against a man charging him with having *wickedly and maliciously written and published a certain false, wicked, and seditious book*; and having gone through all this with a show of solemnity, as if he saw the eye of the Almighty darting through the roof of the building like a ray of light, turn, in an instant, the whole into a farce, and, in order to obtain a verdict that could not otherwise be obtained, tell the jury that the charge of *falsely, wickedly, and seditiously*, meant nothing; that *truth* was out of the question; and that whether the person accused spoke truth or falsehood, or intended *virtuously or wickedly*, was the same thing; and finally conclude the wretched inquisitorial scene, by stating some antiquated precedent, equally as abominable as that which is then acting; or giving some opinion of his own, and *falsely calling the one and the other—law*. It was, most probably, to such a judge as this, that the most solemn of all reproofs was given—“*The Lord will smite thee, thou whitened wall.*”

I now proceed to offer some remarks on what is called a special jury. As to what is called a special verdict, I shall make no other remark upon it, than that it is in reality *not* a verdict. It is an attempt on the part of the jury to delegate, or of the bench to obtain, the exercise of that right, which is committed to the jury only.

With respect to the special juries, I shall state such matters as I have been able to collect, for I do not find any uniform opinion concerning the mode of appointing them.

In the first place, the mode of trial is but of modern invention and the origin of it, as I am told, is as follows:

Formerly, when disputes arose between merchants, and were brought before a court, the case was that the nature of their commerce, and the method of keeping merchants' accounts not being sufficiently understood by persons out of their own line, it became necessary to depart from the common mode of appointing juries

whose *practical knowledge* would enable them justly to decide upon the case. From this introduction, special juries became more general, but some doubts having arisen as to their legality, an act was passed in the 3d of George II. to establish them as legal, and also to extend them to all cases, not only between individuals, but in cases where *the government itself should be the prosecutor*. This most probably gave rise to the suspicion so generally entertained of packing a jury; because, by this act, when the crown, as it is called, is the prosecutor, the master of the crown-office, who holds his office under the crown, is the person who either wholly nominates, or has great power in nominating the jury, and therefore it has greatly the appearance of the prosecuting party selecting a jury.

The process is as follows :

On motion being made in court, by either the plaintiff or defendant, for a special jury, the court grants it or not, at its own discretion.

If it be granted, the solicitor of the party that applied for the special jury, gives notice to the solicitor of the adverse party, and a day and hour are appointed for them to meet at the office of the master of the crown-office. The master of the crown-office sends to the sheriff or his deputy, who attends with the sheriff's book of freeholders. Forty-eight names are taken, and a copy thereof given to each of the parties; and, on a future day, notice is again given, and the solicitors meet a second time, and each strikes out twelve names. The list being thus reduced from forty-eight to twenty-four, the first twelve that appear in court and answer to their names, is the special jury for that cause. The first operation, that of taking the forty-eight names, is called nominating the jury and the reducing them to twenty-four is called striking the jury.

Having thus stated the general process, I come to particulars; and the first question will be, how are the forty-eight names, out of which the jury is to be struck, obtained from the sheriff's book? For herein lies the principle ground of suspicion, with respect to what is understood by packing of juries.

Either they must be taken by some rule agreed upon between the parties, or by some common rule known and established beforehand, or at the discretion of some person, who in such a case, ought to be perfectly disinterested in the issue, as well official as otherwise.

In the case of merchants, and in all cases between individuals the master of the office, called the crown-office, is officially an indifferent person, and as such may be a proper person to act between the parties, and present them with a list of forty-eight names, out of which each party is to strike twelve. But the case assumes an entire difference of character, when the government itself is the prosecutor. The master of the crown-office is then an officer holding his office under the prosecutor; and it is therefore no wonder that the suspicion of packing juries should, in such cases, have been so prevalent.

This will apply with additional force, when the prosecution is commenced against the author or publisher of such works as treat of reforms, and of the abolition of superfluous places and offices, &c. because in such cases every person holding an office, subject to that suspicion, becomes interested as a party; and the office, called the crown-office, may, upon examination, be found to be of this description.

I have heard it asserted, that the master of the crown-office is to open the sheriff's book as it were per hazard, and take there-out forty-eight *following* names, to which the word merchant or esquire is affixed. The former of these are certainly proper, when the case is between merchants, and has reference to the origin of the custom, and to nothing else. As to the word esquire, every man is an esquire who pleases to call himself esquire; and the sensible part of mankind are leaving it off. But the matter for inquiry is, whether there be any existing law to direct the mode by which the forty-eight names shall be taken, or whether the mode be merely that of custom which the office has created; or whether the selection of the forty-eight be wholly at the discretion and choice of the master of the crown-office? One or other of the two latter appears to be the case, because the act already mentioned, of the 3d of George II. lays down no rule or mode, nor refers to any preceding law—but says only, that special juries shall hereafter be struck, “*in such manner as special juries have been and are usually struck.*”

This act appears to have been what is generally understood by a “*deep take in.*” It was fitted to the spur of the moment in which it was passed, 3d of George II. when parties ran high, and it served to throw into the hands of Walpole, who was then minister, the management of juries in crown prosecutions, by making

the nomination of the forty-eight persons, from whom the jury was to be struck, follow the precedent established by custom between individuals, and by this means it slipped into practice with less suspicion. Now, the manner of obtaining special juries through the medium of an officer of the government, such, for instance, as a master of the crown-office, may be impartial in the case of merchants, or other individuals, but it becomes highly improper and suspicious in cases where the government itself is one of the parties. And it must, upon the whole, appear a strange inconsistency, that a government should keep one officer to nominate the forty-eight persons from whom the jury is to be struck, both of whom are *officers of the civil list*, and yet continue to call this by the pompous name of *the glorious right of trial by jury* !

In the case of the king against Jordan, for publishing the Rights of Man, the attorney-general moved for the appointment of a special jury, and the master of the crown-office nominated the forty-eight persons himself, and took them from such part of the sheriff's book as he pleased.

The trial did not come on, occasioned by Jordan withdrawing his plea ; but if it had, it might have afforded an opportunity of discussing the subject of special juries ; for though such discussion might have had no effect in the court of king's bench, it would, in the present disposition for inquiry, have had a considerable effect upon the country ; and, in all national reforms, this is the proper point to begin at. Put a country right, and it will soon put government right. Among the improper things acted by the government in the case of special juries, on their own motion, one has been that of treating the jury with a dinner, and afterwards giving each jurymen two guineas, if a verdict be found for the prosecution, and only one if otherwise ; and it has been long observed, that, in London and Westminster, there are persons who appear to make a trade of serving, by being so frequently seen upon special juries.

Thus much for special juries. As to what is called a *common jury*, upon any government prosecution against the author or publisher of the Rights of Man, during the time of the *present sheriffry*, I have one question to offer, which is, *whether the present sheriffs of London, having publicly prejudged the case, by the part they have taken in procuring an address from the county of Middlesex, (however diminutive and insignificant the number of addressers*

were, being only one hundred and eighteen) are eligible or proper persons to be intrusted with the power of returning a jury to try the issue of any such prosecution.

But the whole matter appears, at least to me, to be worthy of a more extensive consideration than what relates to any jury, whether special or common ; for the case is, whether any part of a whole nation, locally selected as a jury of twelve men always is, be competent to judge and determine for the whole nation, on any matter that relates to systems and principles of government, and whether it be not applying the institution of juries to purposes for which such institutions were not intended ? For example,

I have asserted, in the work *Rights of Man*, that as every man in the nation pays taxes, so has every man a right to a share in government, and, consequently, that the people of Manchester, Birmingham, Sheffield, Leeds, Halifax, &c. have the same right as those of London. Shall, then, twelve men, picked out between Temple-bar and Whitechapel, because the book happened to be first published there, decide upon the rights of the inhabitants of those towns, or of any other town or village in the nation ?

Having thus spoken of juries, I come next to offer a few observations on the matter contained in the information or prosecution.

The work, *Rights of Man*, consists of part the first, and part the second. The first the prosecutor has thought it most proper to let alone ; and from the second part he has selected a few short paragraphs, making in the whole not quite two pages of the same printing as in the cheap edition. Those paragraphs relate chiefly to certain facts, such as the revolution of 1688, and the coming of George I. commonly called the house of Hanover, or the house of Brunswick, or some such house. The arguments, plans and principles contained in the work, the prosecutor has not ventured to attack. They are beyond his reach.

The act which the prosecutor appears to rest most upon for the support of the prosecution, is the act, entitled "An act, declaring the rights and liberties of the subject, and settling the succession of the crown," passed in the first year of William and Mary, and more commonly known by the name of the "bill of rights."

I have called this bill "*A bill of wrongs and of insult.*" My reasons, and also my proofs, are as follow :

The method and principle which this bill takes for declaring rights and liberties, are in direct contradiction to rights and liberties ; it is an assumed attempt to take them wholly from posterity—for the declaration in the said bill is as follows :

“ The lords spiritual and temporal, and commons, do, in *the name of all the people*, most humbly and faithfully *submit themselves, their heirs, and posterity forever* ;” that is, to William and Mary his wife, their heirs and successors. This is a strange way of declaring rights and liberties. But the parliament who made this declaration in the name, and on the part of the people, had no authority from them for so doing ; and with respect to *posterity for ever*, they had no right or authority whatever in the case. It was assumption and usurpation. I have reasoned very extensively against the principle of this bill, in the first part of the Rights of Man ; the prosecutor has silently admitted that reasoning, and he now commences a prosecution on the authority of the bill, after admitting the reasoning against it.

It is also to be observed, that the declaration in this bill, abject and irrational as it is, had no other intentional operation than against the family of the Stuarts, and their abettors. The idea did not then exist, that in the space of an hundred years, posterity might discover a different and much better system of government, and that every species of hereditary government might fall, as popes and monks had fallen before. This, I say, was not then thought of, and therefore the application of the bill, in the present case, is a new, erroneous, and illegal application, and is the same as creating a new bill *ex post facto*.

It has ever been the craft of courtiers, for the purpose of keeping up an expensive and enormous civil list, and a mummerly of useless and antiquated places and offices at the public expense, to be continually hanging England upon some individual or other, called *king*, though the man might not have capacity to be a parish constable. The folly and absurdity of this, is appearing more and more every day ; and still those men continue to act as if no alteration in the public opinion had taken place. They hear each other's nonsense, and suppose the whole nation talks the same gibberish.

Let such men cry up the house of Orange, or the house of Brunswick, if they please. They would cry up any other house

if it suited their purpose, and give as good reasons for it. But what is this house, or that house, or any other house to a nation? "*For a nation to be free, it is sufficient that she wills it.*" Her freedom depends wholly upon herself, and not on any house, nor on any individual. I ask not in what light this cargo of foreign houses appears to others, but I will say in what light it appears to me. It was like the trees of the forest, saying unto the bramble, come thou and reign over us.

Thus much for both of their houses. I now come to speak of two other houses, which are also put into the information, and those are the house of lords, and the house of commons. Here, I suppose, the attorney-general intends to prove me guilty of speaking either truth or falsehood; for, according to the modern interpretation of libels, it does not signify which, and the only improvement necessary to show the complete absurdity of such doctrine, would be, to prosecute a man for uttering a most *false and wicked truth*.

I will quote the part I am going to give, from the office copy, with the attorney-general's inuendoes, enclosed in parentheses, as they stand in the information, and I hope that civil list officer will caution the court not to laugh when he reads them, and also to take care not to laugh himself.

The information states, That *Thomas Paine, being a wicked, malicious, seditious, and evil disposed person, hath, with force and arms, and most wicked cunning, written and published a certain false, scandalous, malicious, and seditious libel; in one part thereof, to the tenor and effect following, that is to say:*

"With respect to the two houses, of which the English parliament (*meaning the parliament of this kingdom*) is composed, they appear to be effectually influenced into one, and, as a legislature, to have no temper of its own. The minister, (*meaning the minister employed by the king of this realm, in the administration of the government thereof,*) whoever he at any time may be, touches it (*meaning the two houses of parliament of this kingdom*) as with an opium wand, and it (*meaning the two houses of parliament of this kingdom*) sleeps obedience. As I am not malicious enough to disturb their repose, though it be time they should awake, I leave the two houses and the attorney-general, to the enjoyment of their dreams, and proceed to a new subject."

The gentlemen, to whom I shall next address myself, are those who have styled themselves "*friends of the people*," holding their meeting at the Freemason's tavern, London.

One of the principal members of this society, is Mr. Grey, who, I believe, is also one of the most independent members in parliament. I collect this opinion from what Mr. Burke formerly mentioned to me, rather than from any knowledge of my own. The occasion was as follows :

I was in England at the time the bubble broke forth about Nootka Sound: and the day after the king's message, as it is called, was sent to parliament; I wrote a note to Mr. Burke, that upon the condition the French revolution should not be a subject (for he was then writing the book I have since answered) I would call on him the next day, and mention some matters I was acquainted with, respecting the affair; for it appeared to me extraordinary that any body of men, calling themselves representatives, should commit themselves so precipitately, or, "sleep obedience," as parliament was then doing, and run a nation into expense, and, perhaps, a war, without so much as inquiring into the case, or the subject, of both which I had some knowledge.

When I saw Mr. Burke, and mentioned the circumstances to him, he particularly spoke of Mr. Grey, as the fittest member to bring such matters forward; for, said Mr. Burke, "*I am not the proper person to do it, as I am in a treaty with Mr. Pitt about Mr. Hastings' trial.*" I hope the attorney-general will allow, that Mr. Burke was then *sleeping his obedience*. But to return to the society.

I cannot bring myself to believe, that the general motive of this society is any thing more than that by which every former parliamentary opposition has been governed, and by which the present is sufficiently known. Failing in their pursuit of power and place within doors, they have now (and that in not a very mannerly manner) endeavored to possess themselves of that ground out of doors, which, had it not been made by others, would not have been made by them. They appear to me to have watched, with more cunning than candor, the progress of a certain publication and when they saw it had excited a spirit of inquiry, and was rapidly spreading, they stepped forward to profit by the opportunity, and Mr. Fox *then* called it a libel. In saying this, he libelled

himself. Politicians of this cast, such, I mean, as those who trim between parties, and lie by for events, are to be found in every country, and it never yet happened that they did not do more harm than good. They embarrass business, fritter it to nothing, perplex the people, and the event to themselves generally is, that they go just far enough to make enemies of the few, without going far enough to make friends of the many.

Whoever will read the declarations of this society, of the 25th of April and 5th of May, will find a studied reserve upon all the points that are real abuses. They speak not once of the extravagance of government, of the abominable list of unnecessary and sinecure places and pensions, of the enormity of the civil list, of the excess of taxes, nor of any one matter that substantially affects the nation ; and from some conversation that has passed in that society, it does not appear to me that it is any part of their plan to carry this class of reforms into practice. No opposition party ever did, when it gained possession.

In making these free observations, I mean not to enter into contention with this society ; their incivility towards me is what I should expect from place-hunting reformers. They are welcome, however, to the ground they have advanced upon, and I wish that every individual among them may act in the same upright, uninfluenced, and public spirited manner that I have done. Whatever reforms may be obtained, and by whatever means, they will be for the benefit of others and not of me. I have no other interest in the cause than the interest of my heart. The part I have acted has been wholly that of a volunteer, unconnected with party ; and when I quit, it shall be as honorably as I began.

I consider the reform of parliament, by an application to parliament, as proposed by the society, to be a worn out hacknied subject, about which the nation is tired, and the parties are deceiving each other. It is not a subject that is cognizable before parliament, because no government has a right to alter itself, either in whole or in part. The right, and the exercise of that right, appertains to the nation only, and the proper means is by a national convention, elected for the purpose, by all the people. By this, the will of the nation whether to reform or not, or what the reform shall be, or how far it shall extend, will be known and it cannot be known by any other means Partial ad

dressess, or separate associations, are not testimonies of the general will.

It is, however, certain, that the opinions of men, with respect to systems and principles of government, are changing fast in all countries. The alteration in England within the space of a little more than a year, is far greater than could have been believed, and it is daily and hourly increasing. It moves along the country with the silence of thought. The enormous expense of government has provoked men to think, by making them feel; and the proclamation has served to increase jealousy and disgust. To prevent, therefore, those commotions which too often and too suddenly arise from suffocated discontents, it is best that the general WILL should have the full and free opportunity of being publicly ascertained and known.

Wretched as the state of representation is in England, it is every day becoming worse, because the unrepresented parts of the nation are increasing in population and property, and the represented parts are decreasing. It is, therefore, no ill grounded estimation to say, that as not one person in seven is represented, at least fourteen millions of taxes, out of the seventeen millions, are paid by the unrepresented part; for although copyholds and leaseholds are assessed to the land tax, the holders are unrepresented. Should then a general demur take place as to the obligation of paying taxes, on the ground of not being represented, it is not the representatives of rotten-boroughs, nor special juries, that can decide the question. This is one of the possible cases that ought to be foreseen, in order to prevent the inconveniences that might arise to numerous individuals, by provoking it.

I confess I have no idea of petitioning for rights. Whatever the rights of people are, they have a right to them, and nobody has a right either to withhold them, or to grant them. Government ought to be established on such principles of justice as to exclude the occasion of all such applications; for, wherever they appear, they are virtually accusations.

I wish that Mr. Grey, since he has embarked in the business, would take the whole of it into consideration. He will then see, that the right of reforming the state of the representation does not reside in parliament, and that the only motion he could consistently make would be, that parliament should *recommend* the election of a convention of the people, because all pay taxes. But

whether parliament recommend it or not, the right of the nation would neither be lessened nor increased thereby.

As to petitions from the unrepresented part, they ought not to be looked for. As well might it be expected that Manchester Sheffield, &c. should petition the rotten-boroughs, as that they should petition the representatives of those boroughs. Those two towns alone pay far more taxes than all the rotten-boroughs put together, and it is scarcely to be expected they should pay their court either to the boroughs, or the borough-mongers.

It ought also to be observed, that what is called parliament, is composed of two houses that have always declared against the right of each other to interfere in any matter that related to the circumstances of either, particularly that of election. A reform, therefore, in the representation cannot, on the ground they have individually taken, become the subject of an act of parliament, because such a mode would include the interference, against which the commons on their part have protested ; but must, as well on the ground of formality, as on that of right, proceed from a national convention.

Let Mr. Grey, or any other man, sit down and endeavor to put his thoughts together, for the purpose of drawing up an application to parliament for a reform of parliament, and he will soon convince himself of the folly of the attempt. He will find that he cannot get on ; that he cannot make his thoughts join, so as to produce any effect ; for, whatever formality of words he may use, they will unavoidably include two ideas directly opposed to such other ; the one in setting forth the reasons, the other in praying for relief, and the two, when placed together, would stand thus : "*The representation in parliament is so very corrupt, that we can no longer confide in it,—and, therefore, confiding in the justice and wisdom of parliament, we pray,*" &c.

The heavy manner in which every former proposed application to parliament has dragged, sufficiently shows, that though the nation might not exactly see the awkwardness of the measure, it could not clearly see its way, by those means. To this also may be added another remark, which is, that the worse parliament is the less will be the inclination to petition it. This indifference, viewed as it ought to be, is one of the strongest censures the public express. It is as if they were to say to them, "Ye are not worth reforming."

Let any man examine the court-calendar of placemen in both houses, and the manner in which the civil list operates, and he will be at no loss to account for this indifference and want of confidence on one side, nor of the opposition to reforms on the other.

Who would have supposed that Mr. Burke, holding forth as he formerly did against secret influence, and corrupt majorities, should become a concealed pensioner? I will now state the case, not for the little purpose of exposing Mr. Burke, but to show the inconsistency of any application to a body of men, more than half of whom, as far as the nation can at present know, may be in the same case with himself.

Towards the end of Lord North's administration, Mr. Burke brought a bill into parliament, generally known by Mr. Burke's reform bill; in which, among other things, it is enacted, "That no pension exceeding the sum of three hundred pounds a-year, shall be granted to any one person, and that the whole amount of the pensions granted in one year shall not exceed six hundred thousand pounds;" a list of which, "together with the *names of the persons* to whom the same are granted, shall be laid before parliament in twenty days after the beginning of each session, until the whole pension list shall be reduced to ninety thousand pounds." A provisory clause is afterwards added, "That it shall be lawful for the first commissioner of the treasury, to return into the exchequer, any pension or annuity, *without a name*, on his making oath that such pension or annuity is not directly or indirectly for the benefit, use, or behoof of any member of the house of commons."

But soon after that administration ended, and the party Mr. Burke acted with came into power, it appears from the circumstances I am going to relate, that Mr. Burke became himself a pensioner in disguise; in a similar manner as if a pension had been granted in the name of John Nokes, to be privately paid to and enjoyed by Tom Stiles. The name of Edmund Burke does not appear in the original transaction: but after the pension was obtained, Mr. Burke wanted to make the most of it at once, by selling or mortgaging it; and the gentleman in whose name the pension stands, applied to one of the public offices for that purpose. This unfortunately brought forth the name of *Edmund*

Burke, as the real pensioner of 1,500*l.* per annum. When men trumpet forth what they call the blessings of the constitution, it ought to be known what sort of blessings they allude to.

As to the civil list of a million a-year, it is not to be supposed that any one man can eat, drink, or consume the whole upon himself. The case is, that above half the sum is annually apportioned among courtiers, and court members of both houses, in places and offices, altogether insignificant, and perfectly useless, as to every purpose of civil, rational, and manly government. For instance,

Of what use in the science and system of government, is what is called a lord chamberlain, a master and mistress of the robes, a master of the horse, a master of the hawks, and a hundred other such things? Laws derive no additional force, nor additional excellence from such mummary.

In the disbursements of the civil list for the year 1786, (which may be seen in Sir John St. Clair's History of the Revenue,) are four separate charges for this mummary office of chamberlain :

1st,	-	-	-	-	-	-	33,770 <i>l.</i>	17 <i>s.</i>	—
2d,	-	-	-	-	-	-	3,000	—	—
3d,	-	-	-	-	-	-	24,069	19	—
4th,	-	-	-	-	-	-	10,000	19	3 <i>d.</i>

75,849*l.* 14*s.* 3*d.*

Besides 1,119*l.* charged for alms.

From this sample the rest may be guessed at. As to the master of the hawks, (there are no hawks kept, and if there were, it is no reason the people should pay the expense of feeding, them many of whom are put to it to get bread for their children,) his salary is 1,372*l.* 10*s.*

And besides a list of items of this kind, sufficient to fill a quire of paper, the pension lists alone are 107,404*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* which is a greater sum than all the expenses of the federal government in America amount to.

Among the items, there are two, that I had no expectation of finding, and which, in this day of inquiry after civil list influence, ought to be exposed. The one is an annual payment of one thousand seven hundred pounds to the dissenting ministers in England and the other, eight hundred pounds to those in Ireland.

This is the fact, and the distribution, as I am informed, is as follows : the whole sum of 1,700*l.* is paid to one person, a dissenting minister in London, who divides it among eight others ; and those eight among such others as they please. The lay-body of the dissenters, and many of their principal ministers, have long considered it as dishonorable, and have endeavored to prevent it, but still it continues to be secretly paid ; and as the world has sometimes seen very fulsome addresses from parts of that body, it may naturally be supposed that the receivers, like bishops and other court clergy, are not idle in promoting them. How the money is distributed in Ireland, I know not.

To recount all the secret history of the civil list, is not the intention of this publication. It is sufficient in this place to expose its general character, and the mass of influence it keeps alive. It will necessarily become one of the objects of reform ; and therefore enough is said to show, that under its operation, no application to parliament can be expected to succeed, nor can consistently be made.

Such reforms will not be promoted by the party that is in possession of those places, nor by the opposition who are waiting for them ; and as to a *mere reform*, in the state of the representation, under the idea that another parliament, differently elected from the present, but still a third component part of the same system, and subject to the control of the other two parts, will abolish those abuses, is altogether delusion ; because it is not only impracticable on the ground of formality, but is unwisely exposing another set of men to the same corruptions that have tainted the present.

Were all the objects that require reform accomplishable by a mere reform in the state of representation, the persons who compose the present parliament might, with rather more propriety, be asked to abolish all the abuses themselves, than be applied to as the more instruments of doing it by a future parliament. If the virtue be wanting to abolish the abuse, it is also wanting to act as the means, and the nation must, from necessity, proceed by some other plan.

Having thus endeavored to show what the abject condition of parliament is, and the impropriety of going a second time over the same ground that has before miscarried, I come to the remaining part of the subject.

There ought to be, in the constitution of every country, a mode of referring back, on any extraordinary occasion, to the sovereign and original constituent power, which is the nation itself. The right of altering any part of a government, cannot, as already observed, reside in the government, or that government might make itself what it pleased.

It ought also to be taken for granted, that though a nation may feel inconveniences, either in the excess of taxation, or in the mode of expenditure, or in any thing else, it may not at first be sufficiently assured in what part of its government the defect lies, or where the evil originates. It may be supposed to be in one part, and on inquiry be found to be in another ; or partly in all. This obscurity is naturally interwoven with what are called mixed governments.

Be, however, the reform to be accomplished whatever it may, it can only follow in consequence of obtaining a full knowledge of all the causes that have rendered such reform necessary, and every thing short of this is guess-work or frivolous cunning. In this case, it cannot be supposed that any application to parliament can bring forward this knowledge. The body is itself the supposed cause, or one of the supposed causes, of the abuses in question ; and cannot be expected, and ought not to be asked, to give evidence against itself. The inquiry, therefore, which is of necessity the first step in the business, cannot be trusted to parliament, but must be undertaken by a distinct body of men, separated from every suspicion of corruption or influence.

Instead, then, of referring to rotten-boroughs and absurd corporations for addresses, or hawking them about the country to be signed by a few dependant tenants, the real and effectual mode would be to come at once to the point, and to ascertain the sense of the nation by electing a national convention. By this method, as already observed, the general WILL, whether to reform or not, or what the reform shall be, or how far it shall extend, will be known, and it cannot be known by any other means. Such a body, empowered and supported by the nation, will have authority to demand information upon all matters necessary to be inquired into ; and no minister, nor any person, will dare to refuse it. It will then be seen whether seventeen millions of taxes are necessary, and for what purposes they are expended. The concealed pensioners will then be obliged to unmask ; and the source of

influence and corruption, if any such there be, will be laid open to the nation, not for the purpose of revenge, but of redress.

By taking this public and national ground, all objections against partial addresses on the one side, or private associations on the other, will be done away; *the nation will declare its own reforms*; and the clamor about party and faction, or ins or outs, will become ridiculous.

The plan and organization of a convention is easy in practice.

In the first place, the number of inhabitants in every county can be sufficiently ascertained from the number of houses assessed to the house and window-light tax in each county. This will give the rule for apportioning the number of members to be elected to the national convention in each of the counties.

If the total number of inhabitants in England be seven millions, and the total number of members to be elected to the convention be one thousand, the number of members to be elected in a county, containing one hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants, will be twenty-one, and in like proportion for any other county.

As the election of a convention must, in order to ascertain the general sense of the nation, go on grounds different from that of parliamentary elections, the mode that best promises this end will have no difficulties to combat with from absurd customs and pretended rights. The right of every man will be the same, whether he lives in a city, a town, or a village. The custom of attaching rights to *place*, or in other words, to inanimate matter, instead of to *persons*, independently of place, is too absurd to make any part of a rational argument.

As every man in the nation, of the age of twenty-one years, pays taxes, either out of the property he possesses, or out of the product of his labor, which is property to him; and is amenable in his own person to every law of the land; so has every one the same equal right to vote, and no one part of the nation, nor any individual, has a right to dispute the right of another. The man who should do this ought to forfeit the exercise of his *own* right for a term of years. This would render the punishment consistent with the crime.

When a qualification to vote is regulated by years, it is placed on the firmest possible ground; because the qualification is such, as nothing but dying before the time can take away; and the

equality of rights, as a principle, is recognized in the act of regulating the exercise. But when rights are placed upon, or made dependant upon property, they are on the most precarious of all tenures ; " Riches make themselves wings, and fly away," and the rights fly with them ; and thus they become lost to the man when they would be of most value.

It is from a strange mixture of tyranny and cowardice, that exclusions have been set up and continued. The boldness to do wrong at first, changes afterwards into cowardly craft, and at last into fear. The representatives in England appear now to act as if they were afraid to do right, even in part, lest it should awaken the nation to a sense of all the wrongs it has endured. This case serves to show, that the same conduct that best constitutes the safety of an individual, namely, a strict adherence to principle, constitutes also the safety of a government, and that without it safety is but an empty name. When the rich plunder the poor of his rights, it becomes an example to the poor to plunder the rich of his property ; for the rights of the one are as much property to him, as wealth is property to the other, and the *little all* is as dear as the *much*.

It is only by setting out on just principles that men are trained to be just to each other ; and it will always be found, that when the rich protect the rights of the poor, the poor will protect the property of the rich. But the guarantee, to be effectual, must be parliamentarily reciprocal.

Exclusions are not only unjust, but they frequently operate as injuriously to the party who monopolizes, as to those who are excluded. When men seek to exclude others from participating in the exercise of any right, they should, at least, be assured, that they can effectually perform the whole of the business they undertake ; for, unless they do this, themselves will be losers by the monopoly. This has been the case with respect to the monopolized right of election. The monopolizing party has not been able to keep the parliamentary representation, to whom the power of taxation was entrusted, in the state it ought to have been, and have thereby multiplied taxes upon themselves equally with those who were excluded.

A great deal has been, and will continue to be said, about disqualifications, arising from the commission of offences ; but were this subject urged to its full extent, it would disqualify a great

number of the present electors, together with their representatives; for, of all offences, none are more destructive to the morals of society than bribery and corruption. It is, therefore, civility to such persons to pass this subject over, and to give them a fair opportunity of recovering, or rather of creating character.

Every thing, in the present mode of electioneering in England, is the reverse of what it ought to be, and the vulgarity that attends elections is no other than the natural consequence of inverting the order of the system.

In the first place, the candidate seeks the elector, instead of the elector seeking for a representative; and the electors are advertised as being in the interest of the candidate, instead of the candidate being in the interest of the electors. The candidate pays the elector for his vote, instead of the nation paying the representative for his time and attendance on public business. The complaint for an undue election is brought by the candidate: as if he, and not the electors, were the party aggrieved; and he takes on himself at any period of the election, to break it up, by declining, as if the election was in his right and not in theirs.

The compact that was entered into at the last Westminster election between two of the candidates, (Mr. Fox and lord Hood,) was an indecent violation of the principles of election. The candidates assumed, in their own persons, the rights of the electors; for, it was only in the body of the electors, and not at all in the candidates, that the right of making any such compact, or compromise, could exist. But the principle of election and representation is so completely done away, in every stage thereof, that inconsistency has no longer the power of surprising.

Neither from elections thus conducted, nor from rotten-borough addressers, nor from county meetings, promoted by placemen and pensioners, can the sense of the nation be known. It is still corruption appealing to itself. But a convention of a thousand persons, fairly elected, would bring every matter to a decided issue.

As to county meetings, it is only persons of leisure, or those who live near to the place of meeting, that can attend, and the number on such occasions is but like a drop in the bucket compared with the whole. The only consistent service which such meetings could render, would be that of apportioning the county into convenient districts, and when this is done, each district might,

according to its number of inhabitants, elect its quota of county members to the national convention ; and the vote of each elector might be taken in the parish where he resided, either by ballot or by voice, as he should choose to give it.

A national convention thus formed, would bring together the sense and opinions of every part of the nation, fairly taken. The science of government, and the interest of the public, and of the several parts thereof, would then undergo an ample and rational discussion, freed from the language of parliamentary disguise.

But in all deliberations of this kind, though men have a right to reason with, and endeavor to convince each other, upon any matter that respects their common good, yet, in point of practice, the majority of opinions, when known, forms a rule for the whole, and to this rule every good citizen practically conforms.

Mr. Burke, as if he knew, (for every concealed pensioner has the opportunity of knowing,) that the abuses acted under the present system, are too flagrant to be palliated, and that the majority of opinions, whenever such abuses should be made public, would be for a general and effectual reform, has endeavored to preclude the event, by sturdily denying the right of a majority of a nation to act as a whole. Let us bestow a thought upon this case.

When any matter is proposed as a subject for consultation, it necessarily implies some mode of decision. Common consent, arising from absolute necessity, has placed this in a majority of opinions ; because, without it, there can be no decision, and consequently no order. It is perhaps the only case in which mankind, however various in their ideas upon other matters, can consistently be unanimous ; because it is a mode of decision derived from the primary original right of every individual concerned ; *that right* being first individually exercised in giving an opinion, and whether that opinion shall arrange with the minority or the majority, is a subsequent accidental thing that neither increases nor diminishes the individual original right itself. Prior to any debate, inquiry or investigation, it is not supposed to be known on which side the majority of opinions will fall, and, therefore, whilst this mode of decision secures to every one the right of giving an opinion, it admits to every one an equal chance in the ultimate event.

Among the matters that will present themselves to the consideration of a national convention, there is one, wholly of a domestic nature, but so marvellously loaded with confusion, as to appear at

first sight, almost impossible to be reformed. I mean the condition of what is called law.

But, if we examine into the cause from whence this confusion, now so much the subject of universal complaint, is produced, not only the remedy will immediately present itself, but, with it, the means of preventing the like case hereafter.

In the first place, the confusion has generated itself from the absurdity of every parliament assuming to be eternal in power, and the laws partake in a similar manner, of this assumption. They have no period of legal or natural expiration; and, however absurd in principle, or inconsistent in practice, many of them have become, they still are, if not especially repealed, considered as making a part of the general mass. By this means the body of what is called law, is spread over a space of *several hundred years*, comprehending laws obsolete, laws repugnant, laws ridiculous, and every other kind of laws forgotten or remembered; and what renders the case still worse, is, that the confusion multiplies with the progress of time.*

To bring this misshapen monster into form, and to prevent its lapsing again into a wilderness state, only two things, and those very simple, are necessary.

The first is, to review the whole mass of laws, and to bring forward such only as are worth retaining, and let all the rest drop; and to give to the laws so brought forward a new era, commencing from the time of such reform.

Secondly; that at the expiration of every twenty-one years (or any other stated period) a like review shall again be taken, and the laws, found proper to be retained, be again carried forward, commencing with that date, and the useless laws dropped and discontinued.

By this means there can be no obsolete laws, and scarcely such a thing as laws standing in direct or equivocal contradiction to each other, and every person will know the period of time to which he is to look back for all the laws in being.

It is worth remarking, that while every other branch of science is brought within some commodious system, and the study of it simplified by easy methods, the laws take the contrary course, and

* In the time of Henry IV. a law was passed, making it felony "to multiply gold or silver, or to make use of the craft of multiplication," and this law remained two hundred and eighty-five years upon the statute books. It was then repealed as being ridiculous and injurious.

become every year more complicated, entangled, confused, and obscure.

Among the paragraphs which the attorney-general has taken from the Rights of Man, and put into his information, one is, that where I have said, "that with respect to regular law, there is *scarcely such a thing.*"

As I do not know whether the attorney-general means to show this expression to be libellous, because it is *true*, or because it is *false*, I shall make no other reply to him in this place, than by remarking, that if almanac-makers had not been more judicious than law-makers, the study of almanacs would by this time have become as abstruse as the study of the law, and we should hear of a library of almanacs as we now do of statutes; but by the simple operation of letting the obsolete matter drop, and carrying forward that only which is proper to be retained, all that is necessary to be known, is found within the space of a year, and laws also admit of being kept within some given period.

I shall here close this letter, so far as it respects the addressers, the proclamation, and the prosecution; and shall offer a few observations to the society, styling itself "The Friends of the People."

That the science of government is beginning to be better understood than in former times, and that the age of fiction and political superstition, and of craft and mystery, is passing away, are matters which the experience of every day proves to be true, as well in England as in other countries.

As therefore it is impossible to calculate the silent progress of opinion, and also impossible to govern a nation after it has changed its habits of thinking, by the craft or policy that it was governed by before, the only true method to prevent popular discontents and commotions is, to throw, by every fair and rational argument, all the light upon the subject that can possibly be thrown; and at the same time, to open the means of collecting the general sense of the nation; and this cannot, as already observed, be done by any plan so effectually as a national convention. Here individual opinion will quiet itself by having a centre to rest upon.

The society already mentioned, (which is made up of men of various descriptions, but chiefly of those called Foxites,) appears to me, either to have taken wrong grounds from want of judgment, or to have acted with cunning reserve. It is now amusing the

people with a new phrase, namely, that of "a temperate and moderate reform," the interpretation of which is, *a continuance of the abuses as long as possible. If we cannot hold all let us hold some.*

Who are those that are frightened at reforms? Are the public afraid that their taxes should be lessened too much? Are they afraid that sinecure places and pensions should be abolished too fast? Are the poor afraid that their condition should be rendered too comfortable? Is the worn out mechanic, or the aged and decayed tradesman, frightened at the prospect of receiving ten pounds a-year out of the surplus taxes? Is the soldier frightened at the thoughts of his discharge, and three shillings per week during life? Is the sailor afraid that press-warrants will be abolished? The society mistakes the fears of borough-mongers, placemen, and pensioners, for the fears of the people; and the *temperate and moderate reform* it talks of, is calculated to suit the condition of the former.

Those words, "temperate and moderate," are words either of political cowardice, or of cunning, or seduction. A thing, moderately good, is not so good as it ought to be. Moderation in temper, is always a virtue; but moderation in principle, is a species of vice. But who is to be the judge of what is a temperate and moderate reform? The society is the representative of nobody; neither can the unrepresented part of the nation commit this power to those in parliament, in whose election they had no choice; and, therefore, even upon the ground the society has taken, recourse must be had to a national convention.

The objection which Mr. Fox made to Mr. Grey's proposed motion for a parliamentary reform was, that it contained no plan. It certainly did not. But the plan very easily presents itself; and whilst it is fair for all parties, it prevents the dangers that might otherwise arise from private or popular discontent.

THOMAS PAINE.

TO

LORD ONSLOW,

*Lord lieutenant of the county of Surry; on the subject of the late
excellent PROCLAMATION :—or the CHAIRMAN who shall preside
at the meeting to be held at Epsom, June 18.*

LONDON, JUNE 17, 1792.

SIR,

I HAVE seen in the public newspapers the following advertisement, to wit—

“To the nobility, gentlemen, clergy, freeholders, and other inhabitants of the county of Surry.

“At the requisition and desire of several of the freeholders of the county, I am, in the absence of the sheriff, to desire the favour of your attendance, at a meeting to be held at Epsom, on Monday, the 18th instant, at 12 o'clock at noon, to consider of an humble address to his MAJESTY, to express our grateful approbation of his MAJESTY's paternal, and well-timed attendance to the public welfare, in his late most gracious proclamation against the enemies of our happy constitution.

(Signed)

ONSLOW CRANLEY.”

Taking it for granted, that the aforesaid advertisement, equally as obscure as the proclamation to which it refers, has nevertheless some meaning, and is intended to effect some purpose; and as a prosecution (whether wisely or unwisely, justly or unjustly) is commenced against a work entitled the RIGHTS OF MAN, of which I have the honour and happiness to be the author; I feel it neces-

sary to address this letter to you, and to request that it may be read publicly to the gentlemen who shall meet at Epsom in consequence of the advertisement.

The work now under prosecution is, I conceive, the same work which is intended to be suppressed by the aforesaid proclamation. Admitting this to be the case, the gentlemen of the county of Surry are called upon by somebody to condemn a work, and they are at the same time forbidden by the proclamation to know what that work is; and they are further called upon to give their aid and assistance to prevent other people from knowing it also.—It is therefore necessary that the author, for his own justification, as well as to prevent the gentlemen who shall meet from being imposed upon by misrepresentation, should give some outlines of the principles and plans which that work contains.

The work, sir, in question contains, first, an investigation of general principles of government.

It also distinguishes government into two classes or systems, the one the hereditary system; the other the representative system; and it compares these two systems with each other.

It shows, that what is called hereditary government cannot exist as a matter of right; because hereditary government always means a government yet to come; and the case always is, that those who are to live afterwards have always the same right to establish a government for themselves as the people who had lived before them.

It also shows the defect to which hereditary government is unavoidably subject: that it must, from the nature of it, throw government into the hands of men totally unworthy of it from the want of principle, or unfitted for it from want of capacity. James II. and many others are recorded in the English history, as proofs of the former of those cases, and instances are to be found all over Europe to prove the truth of the latter.

It then shows that the representative system is the only true system of government; that it is also the only system under which the liberties of any people can be permanently secure; and, further, that it is the only one that can continue the same equal probability at all times of admitting of none but men properly qualified, both by principles and abilities, into government, and of excluding such as are otherwise.

The work shows also, by plans and calculations not hitherto denied nor controverted, not even by the prosecution that is commenced, that the taxes now existing may be reduced at least six millions, that taxes may be entirely taken off from the poor, who are computed at one third of the nation; and that taxes on the other two thirds may be considerably reduced; that the aged poor may be comfortably provided for, and the children of poor families properly educated; that fifteen thousand soldiers, and the same number of sailors, may be allowed three shillings per week during life out of the surplus taxes; and also that a proportionate allowance may be made to the officers, and the pay of the remaining soldiers and sailors be raised; and that it is better to apply the surplus taxes to those purposes, than to consume them upon lazy and profligate placemen and pensioners; and that the revenue, said to be twenty thousand pounds per annum, raised by a tax upon coals, and given to the Duke of Richmond, is a gross imposition upon all the people of London, and ought to be instantly abolished.

This, sir, is a concise abstract of the principles and plans contained in the work that is now prosecuted, and for the suppression of which the proclamation appears to be intended; but as it is impossible that I can, in the compass of a letter, bring into view all the matters contained in the work, and as it is proper that the gentlemen who may compose that meeting should know what the merits or demerits of it are, before they come to any resolutions, either directly or indirectly relating thereto, I request the honour of presenting them with one hundred copies of the second part of the Rights of Man, and also one thousand copies of my letter to Mr. Dundas, which I have directed to be sent to Epsom for that purpose; and I beg the favor of the chairman to take the trouble of presenting them to the gentlemen who shall meet on that occasion, with my sincere wishes for their happiness, and for that of the nation in general.

Having now closed thus much of the subject of my letter, I next come to speak of what has relation to me personally. I am well aware of the delicacy that attends it, but the purpose of calling the meeting appears to me so inconsistent with that justice that is always due between man and man, that it is proper I should (as well on account of the gentlemen who may meet, as on my own account) explain myself fully and candidly thereon.

I have already informed the gentlemen, that a prosecution is commenced against a work of which I have the honor and happiness to be the author ; and I have good reasons for believing that the proclamation which the gentlemen are called to consider, and to present an address upon, is purposely calculated to give an impression to the jury before whom that matter is to come. In short, that it is dictating a verdict by proclamation ; and I consider the instigators of the meeting to be held at Epsom, as aiding and abetting the same improper, and, in my opinion, illegal purpose, and that in a manner very artfully contrived, as I shall now show.

Had a meeting been called of the freeholders of the county of Middlesex, the gentlemen who had composed that meeting would have rendered themselves objectionable as persons to serve on a jury, before whom the judicial case was afterwards to come. But by calling a meeting out of the county of Middlesex, that matter is artfully avoided, and the gentlemen of Surry are summoned, as if it were intended thereby to give a tone to the sort of verdict which the instigators of the meeting no doubt wish should be brought in, and to give countenance to the jury in so doing.

I am, sir,

With much respect to the

Gentlemen who shall meet,

Their and your obedient and humble servant,

THOMAS PAINE.



LETTER II.

TO THE SAME.

LONDON, JUNE 21, 1792.

SIR,

WHEN I wrote you the letter which Mr. Horne Tooke did me the favour to present to you, as chairman of the meeting held at Epsom, Monday, June 18, it was not with much expectation that you would do me the justice of permitting, or recommending it to be publicly read. I am well aware that the signature of Thomas Paine has something in it dreadful to sinecure placemen and pen-

sioners; and when you, on seeing the letter opened, informed the meeting that it was signed Thomas Paine, and added in a note of exclamation, "the common enemy of us all," you spoke one of the greatest truths you ever uttered, if you confine the expression to men of the same description with yourself; men living in indolence and luxury, on the spoil and labors of the public.

The letter has since appeared in the *Argus*, and probably in other papers. It will justify itself; but if any thing on that account hath been wanting, your conduct at the meeting would have supplied the omission. You there sufficiently proved that I was not mistaken in supposing that the meeting was called to give an indirect aid to the prosecution commenced against a work, the reputation of which will long outlive the memory of the pensioner I am writing to.

When meetings, sir, are called by the partisans of the court, to preclude the nation the right of investigating systems and principles of government, and of exposing errors and defects under the pretence of prosecuting any individual—it furnishes an additional motive for maintaining sacred that violated right.

The principles and arguments contained in the work in question, *Rights of Man*, have stood, and they now stand, and I believe ever will stand, unrefuted. They are stated in a fair and open manner to the world, and they have already received the public approbation of a greater number of men, of the best of characters, of every denomination of religion, and of every rank in life, (placemen and pensioners excepted,) than all the juries that shall meet in England, for ten years to come, will amount to; and I have, moreover, good reasons for believing that the approvers of that work, as well private as public, are already more numerous than all the present electors throughout the nation.

Not less than forty pamphlets, intended as answers thereto, have appeared, and as suddenly disappeared; scarcely are the titles of any of them remembered, notwithstanding their endeavors have been aided by all the daily abuse which the court and ministerial newspapers, for almost a year and a half, could bestow, both upon the work and the author; and now that every attempt to refute, and every abuse has failed, the invention of calling the work a libel has been hit upon, and the discomfited party has pusillanimously retreated to prosecution and a jury, and obscure addresses.

As I well know that a long letter from me will not be agreeable to you, I will relieve your uneasiness by making it as short as I conveniently can; and will conclude it with taking up the subject at that part where Mr. Horne Tooke was interrupted from going on when at the meeting.

That gentleman was stating, that the situation you stood in rendered it improper for you to appear *actively* in a scene in which your private interest was too visible; that you were a bedchamber lord at a thousand a-year, and a pensioner at three thousand pounds a-year more; and here he was stopped by the little, but noisy circle you had collected round. Permit me then, sir, to add an explanation to his words, for the benefit of your neighbors, and with which, and a few observations, I shall close my letter.

When it was reported in the English newspapers, some short time since, that the empress of Russia had given to one of her minions a large tract of country, and several thousands of peasants as property, it very justly provoked indignation and abhorrence in those who heard it. But if we compare the mode practised in England, with that which appears to us so abhorrent in Russia, it will be found to amount to very near the same thing; for example—

As the whole of the revenue in England is drawn by taxes from the pockets of the people, those things called gifts and grants (of which kind are all pensions and sinecure places) are paid out of that stock. The difference, therefore, between the two modes is, that in England the money is collected by the government, and then given to the pensioner, and in Russia he is left to collect it for himself. The smallest sum which the poorest family in a county so near London as Surry, can be supposed to pay annually of taxes, is not less than five pounds; and as your sinecure of one thousand, and pension of three thousand per annum, are made up of taxes paid by eight hundred such poor families, it comes to the same thing as if the eight hundred families had been given to you, as in Russia, and you had collected the money on your account. Were you to say that you are not quartered particularly on the people of Surry, but on the nation at large, the objection would amount to nothing; for as there are more pensioners than counties, every one may be considered as quartered on that in which he lives

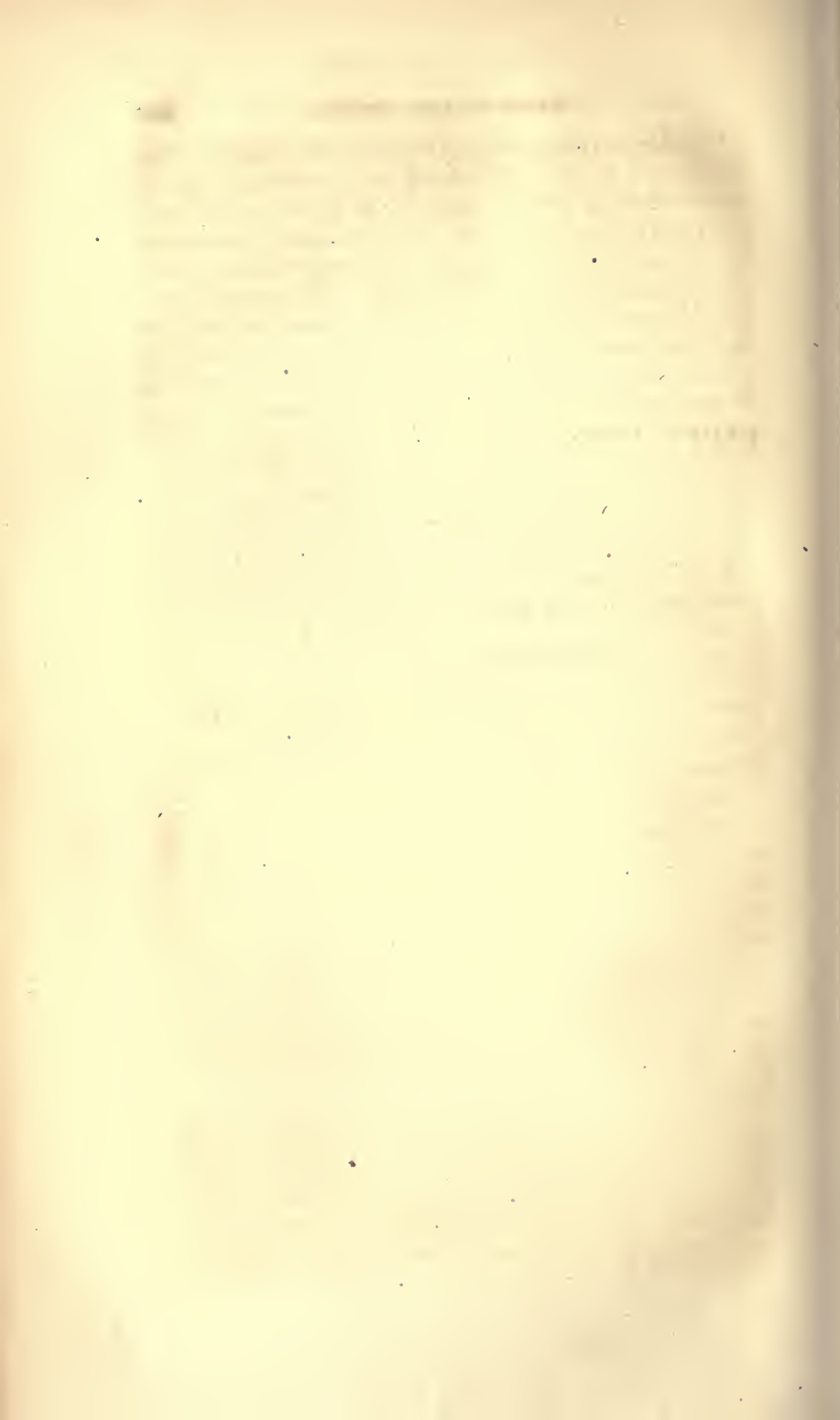
What honour or happiness you can derive from being the *principal pauper* of the neighbourhood, and occasioning a greater expense than the poor, the aged, and the infirm, for ten miles round you, I leave you to enjoy. At the same time I can see that it is no wonder you should be strenuous in suppressing a book which strikes at the root of those abuses. No wonder that you should be against reforms, against the freedom of the press, and the right of investigation. To you, and to others of your description, these are dreadful things; but you should also consider, that the motives which prompt you to *act*, ought, by reflection, to compel you to be *silent*.

Having now returned your compliment, and sufficiently tired your patience, I take my leave of you with mentioning, that if you had not prevented my former letter from being read at the meeting, you would not have had the trouble of reading this; and also with requesting, that the next time you call me "*a common enemy*," you would add, "*of us sinecure placemen and pensioners*."

I am, sir,

&c. &c. &c.

THOMAS PAINE



DISSERTATION

ON

FIRST PRINCIPLES OF GOVERNMENT.



THERE is no subject more interesting to every man than the subject of government. His security, be he rich or poor, and, in a great measure, his prosperity, is connected therewith ; it is therefore his interest, as well as his duty, to make himself acquainted with its principles, and what the practice ought to be.

Every art and science, however imperfectly known at first, has been studied, improved, and brought to what we call perfection, by the progressive labors of succeeding generations ; but the science of government has stood still. No improvement has been made in the principle, and scarcely any in the practice, till the American revolution began. In all the countries of Europe (except in France) the same forms and systems that were erected in the remote ages of ignorance, still continue, and their antiquity is put in the place of principle ; it is forbidden to investigate their origin or by what right they exist. If it be asked how has this happened, the answer is easy ; they are established on a principle that is false, and they employ their power to prevent detection.

Notwithstanding the mystery with which the science of government has been enveloped, for the purpose of enslaving, plundering and imposing upon mankind, it is of all things the least mysterious and the most easy to be understood. The meanest capacity cannot be at a loss, if it begins its inquiries at the right point. Every art and science has some point, or alphabet, at

which the study of that art or science begins, and by the assistance of which the progress is facilitated. The same method ought to be observed with respect to the science of government.

Instead then of embarrassing the subject in the outset with the numerous subdivisions, under which different forms of government have been classed, such as aristocracy, democracy, oligarchy, monarchy, &c. the better method will be to begin with what may be called primary divisions, or those under which all the several subdivisions will be comprehended.

The primary divisions are but two.

1st, Government by election and representation.

2d, Government by hereditary succession.

All the several forms and systems of government, however numerous or diversified, class themselves under one or other of those primary divisions; for either they are on the system of representation, or on that of hereditary succession. As to that equivocal thing called mixed government, such as the late government of Holland, and the present government of England, it does not make an exception to the general rule, because the parts separately considered are either representative or hereditary.

Beginning then our inquiries at this point, we have first to examine into the nature of those two primary divisions. If they are equally right in principle, it is mere matter of opinion which we prefer. If the one be demonstratively better than the other, that difference directs our choice; but if one of them should be so absolutely false as not to have a right to existence, the matter settles itself at once; because a negative proved on one thing, where two only are offered, and one must be accepted, amounts to an affirmative on the other.

The revolutions that are now spreading themselves in the world have their origin in this state of the case, and the present war is a conflict between the representative system, founded on the rights of the people, and the hereditary system, founded in usurpation. As to what are called monarchy, royalty, and aristocracy, they do not, either as things or as terms, sufficiently describe the hereditary system; they are but secondary things or signs of the hereditary system, and which fall of themselves if that system has not a right to exist. Were there no such terms as monarchy, royalty, and aristocracy, or were other terms substituted in their place, the hereditary system, if it continued,

would not be altered thereby. It would be the same system under any other titular name as it is now.

The character, therefore, of the revolutions of the present day, distinguishes itself most definitely by grounding itself on the system of representative government, in opposition to the hereditary. No other distinction reaches the whole of the principle.

Having thus opened the case generally, I proceed, in the first place, to examine the hereditary system, because it has the priority in point of time. The representative system is the invention of the modern world ; and that no doubt may arise as to my own opinion, I declare it before hand, which is, *that there is not a problem in Euclid more mechanically true, than that hereditary government has not a right to exist. When, therefore, we take from any man the exercise of hereditary power, we take away that which he never had the right to possess, and which no law or custom could, or ever can, give him a title to.*

The arguments that have hitherto been employed against the hereditary system, have been chiefly founded upon the absurdity of it, and its incompetency to the purposes of good government. Nothing can present to our judgment, or to our imagination, a figure of greater absurdity than that of seeing the government of a nation fall, as it frequently does, into the hands of a lad necessarily destitute of experience, and often little better than a fool. It is an insult to every man of years, of character, and of talents, in a country. The moment we begin to reason upon the hereditary system, it falls into derision ; let but a single idea begin, and a thousand will soon follow. Insignificance, imbecility, childhood, dotage, want of moral character ; in fine, every defect, serious or laughable, unite to hold up the hereditary system as a figure of ridicule. Leaving, however, the ridiculousness of the thing to the reflections of the reader, I proceed to the more important part of the question, namely, whether such a system has a right to exist ?

To be satisfied of the right of a thing to exist, we must be satisfied that it had a right to begin. If it had not a right to begin, it has not a right to continue. By what right then did the hereditary system begin ? Let a man but ask himself this question, and he will find that he cannot satisfy himself with an answer.

The right which any man, or any family, had to set himself up at first to govern a nation, and to establish itself hereditarily, was no other than the right which Robespierre had to do the same thing in France. If he had none, they had none. If they had any, he had as much ; for it is impossible to discover superiority of right in any family, by virtue of which hereditary government could begin. The Capets, the Guelphs, the Robespierres, the Marats, are all on the same standing as to the question of right. It belongs exclusively to none.

It is one step towards liberty, to perceive that hereditary government could not begin as an exclusive right in any family. The next point will be, whether, having once began, it could grow into a right by the influence of time ?

This would be supposing an absurdity ; for either it is putting time in the place of principle, or making it superior to principle ; whereas no time has more connexion with, or influence upon principle, than principle has upon time. The wrong which began a thousand years ago, is as much a wrong as if it began to-day ; and the right which originates to-day, is as much a right as if it had the sanction of a thousand years. Time with respect to principles is an eternal *now* : it has no operation upon them : it changes nothing of their nature and qualities. But what have we to do with a thousand years ? Our life-time is but a short portion of that period, and if we find the wrong in existence as soon as we begin to live, that is the point of time at which it begins to us ; and our right to resist it, is the same as if it never existed before.

As hereditary government could not begin as a natural right in any family, nor derive after its commencement any right from time, we have only to examine whether there exists in a nation a right to set it up, and establish it by what is called law, as has been done in England ? I answer *no* ; and that any law or any constitution made for that purpose, is an act of treason against the right of every minor in the nation, at the time it is made, and against the rights of all succeeding generations. I shall speak upon each of those cases. First, of the minor, at the time such law is made. Secondly, of the generations that are to follow.

A nation, in a collective sense, comprehends all the individuals of whatever age, from those just born to those just dying. Of these, one part will be minors, and the other aged. The average

of life is not exactly the same in every climate and country, but in general, the minority in years are the majority in numbers ; that is, the number of persons under twenty-one years, is greater than the number of persons above that age. This difference in number is not necessary to the establishment of the principle I mean to lay down, but it serves to show the justice of it more strongly. The principle would be equally as good, if the majority in years were also the majority in numbers.

The rights of minors are as sacred as the rights of the aged. The difference is altogether in the different ages of the two parties, and nothing in the nature of the rights ; the rights are the same rights ; and are to be preserved inviolate for the inheritance of the minors when they shall come of age. During the minority of minors their rights are under the sacred guardianship of the aged. The minor cannot surrender them ; the guardian cannot dispossess him ; consequently, the aged part of a nation, who are the law-makers for the *time being*, and who, in the march of life, are but a few years ahead of those who are yet minors, and to whom they must shortly give place, have not, and cannot have the right to make a law to set up and establish hereditary government, or, to speak more distinctly, *an hereditary succession of governors* ; because it is an attempt to deprive every minor in the nation, at the time such a law is made, of his inheritance of rights when he shall come of age, and to subjugate him to a system of government, to which, during his minority, he could neither consent nor object.

If a person, who is a minor at the time such a law is proposed, had happened to have been born a few years sooner, so as to be of the age of twenty-one years at the time of proposing it, his right to have objected against it, to have exposed the injustice and tyrannical principles of it, and to have voted against it, will be admitted on all sides. If, therefore, the law operates to prevent his exercising the same rights after he comes of age, as he would have had a right to exercise had he been of age at the time, it is, undeniably, a law to take away and annul the rights of every person in the nation who shall be a minor at the time of making such a law, and, consequently, the right to make it cannot exist.

I come now to speak of government by hereditary succession, as it applies to succeeding generations ; and to show that in this

case, as in the case of minors, there does not exist in a nation a right to set it up.

A nation, though continually existing, is continually in a state of renewal and succession. It is never stationary. Every day produces new births, carries minors forward to maturity, and old persons from the stage. In this ever-running flood of generations there is no part superior in authority to another. Could we conceive an idea of superiority in any, at what point of time, or in what century of the world, are we to fix it? To what cause are we to ascribe it? By what evidence are we to prove it? By what criterion are we to know it? A single reflection will teach us that our ancestors, like ourselves, were but tenants for life in the great freehold of rights. The fee-absolute was not in them, it is not in us, it belongs to the whole family of man, through all ages. If we think otherwise than this, we think either as slaves or as tyrants. As slaves, if we think that any former generation had a right to bind us; as tyrants, if we think that we have authority to bind the generations that are to follow.

It may not be inapplicable to the subject, to endeavor to define what is to be understood by a generation, in the sense of the word as here used.

As a natural term its meaning is sufficiently clear. The father, the son, the grandson, are so many distinct generations. But when we speak of a generation, as describing the persons in whom legal authority resides, as distinct from another generation of the same description who are to succeed them, it comprehends all those who are above the age of twenty-one years, at the time that we count from; and a generation of this kind will continue in authority between fourteen and twenty-one years, that is, until the number of minors, who shall have arrived at age, shall be greater than the number of persons remaining of the former stock.

For example; if France, at this or any other moment, contains twenty-four millions of souls, twelve millions will be males, and twelve females. Of the twelve millions of males, six millions will be of the age of twenty-one years, and six will be under, and the authority to govern will reside in the first six. But every day will make some alteration, and in twenty-one years every one of those minors who survives will have arrived at age, and the greater part of the former stock will be gone; the majority of persons then living, in whom the legal authority resides, will be

composed of those who, twenty-one years before, had no legal existence. Those will be fathers and grandfathers in their turn, and, in the next twenty-one years, (or less,) another race of minors, arrived at age, will succeed them, and so on.

As this is ever the case, and as every generation is equal in rights to another, it consequently follows, that there cannot be a right in any to establish government by hereditary succession, because it would be supposing itself possessed of a right superior to the rest, namely, that of commanding by its own authority how the world shall be hereafter governed, and who shall govern it. Every age and generation is, and must be, (as a matter of right,) as free to act for itself in all cases, as the age and generation that preceded it. The vanity and presumption of governing beyond the grave is the most ridiculous and insolent of all tyrannies. Man has no property in man, neither has one generation a property in the generations that are to follow.

In the first part of the *Rights of Man* I have spoken of government by hereditary succession; and I will here close the subject with an extract from that work, which states it under the two following heads.

“1st, Of the right of any family to establish itself with hereditary powers.

“2d, Of the right of a nation to establish a particular family.

“With respect to the first of those heads, that of a family establishing itself with hereditary powers on its own authority, independent of the nation, all men will concur in calling it despotism, and it would be trespassing on their understanding to attempt to prove it.

“But the second head, that of a nation, that is, of a generation for the time being, establishing a particular family with hereditary powers, it does not present itself as despotism on the first reflection; but if men will permit a second reflection to take place, and carry that reflection forward, even but one remove out of their own persons to that of their offspring, they will then see, that hereditary succession becomes the same despotism to others, which the first persons reprobated for themselves. It operates to preclude the consent of the succeeding generation, and the preclusion of consent is despotism.

“In order to see this matter more clearly, let us consider the generation which undertakes to establish a family with

hereditary powers, separately from the generations which are to follow.

The generation which first selects a person and puts him at the head of its government, either with the title of king, or any other nominal distinction, acts its own choice as a free agent for itself, be that choice wise or foolish. The person so set up is *not hereditary*, but selected and appointed; and the generation which sets him up does not live under an hereditary government, but under a government of its own choice. Were the person so set up, and the generation who sets him up, to live for ever, it never could become hereditary succession, and, of consequence, hereditary succession could only follow on the death of the first parties.

“As, therefore, hereditary succession is out of the question with respect to the first generation, we have next to consider the character in which that generation acts towards the commencing generation, and to all succeeding ones.

“It assumes a character to which it has neither right nor title; for it changes itself from a legislator to a testator, and affects to make a will and testament which is to have operation, after the demise of the makers, to bequeath the government; and it not only attempts to bequeath, but to establish on the succeeding generation a new and different form of government under which itself lived. Itself, as already observed, lived not under an hereditary government, but under a government of its own choice; and it now attempts, by virtue of a will and testament, which it has not authority to make, to take from the commencing generation, and from all the future ones, the right and free agency by which itself acted.

“In whatever light hereditary succession, as growing out of the will and testament of some former generation, presents itself, it is both criminal and absurd. A cannot make a will to take from B his property and give it to C; yet this is the manner in which what is called hereditary succession by law operates. A certain generation makes a will, under the form of a law, to take away the rights of the commencing generation, and of all future generations, and convey those rights to a third person, who afterwards comes forward and assumes the government, in consequence of that illicit conveyance.”

The history of the English parliament furnishes an example of this kind ; and which merits to be recorded, as being the greatest instance of legislative ignorance and want of principle that is to be found in any country. The case is as follows :

The English parliament of 1688, imported a man and his wife from Holland, William and Mary, and made them king and queen of England. Having done this, the said parliament made a law to convey the government of the country to the heirs of William and Mary, in the following words : “ We, the lords spiritual and temporal, and commons, do, in the name of the people of England, most humbly and faithfully submit *ourselves, our heirs, and posterities*, to William and Mary, *their heirs and posterities*, for ever.” And in a subsequent law, as quoted by Edmund Burke, the said parliament, in the name of the people of England then living, *binds the said people, their heirs and posterities, to William and Mary, their heirs and posterities to the end of time.*

It is not sufficient that we laugh at the ignorance of such law-makers, it is necessary that we reprobate their want of principle. The constituent assembly of France, (1789,) fell into the same vice as the parliament of England had done, and assumed to establish an hereditary succession in the family of the Capets, as an act of the constitution of that year. That every nation, *for the time being*, has a right to govern itself as it pleases, must always be admitted, but government by hereditary succession is government for another race of people, and not for itself ; and as those on whom it is to operate are not yet in existence, or are minors, so neither is the right in existence to set it up for them, and to assume such a right is treason against the rights of posterity.

I here close the arguments on the first head, that of government by hereditary succession ; and proceed to the second, that of government by election and representation ; or, as it may be concisely expressed, *representative government*, in contradistinction to *hereditary government*.

Reasoning by exclusion, if *hereditary government* has not a right to exist, and that it has not is proveable, *representative government* is admitted of course.

In contemplating government by election and representation, we amuse not ourselves in inquiring when or how, or by what right it began. Its origin is ever in view. Man is himself the

crigin and the evidence of the right. It appertains to him in right of his existence, and his person is the title-deed.

The true and only true basis of representative government is equality of rights. Every man has a right to one vote, and no more, in the choice of representatives. The rich have no more right to exclude the poor from the right of voting, or of electing and being elected, than the poor have to exclude the rich ; and wherever it is attempted, or proposed, on either side, it is a question of force, and not of right. Who is he that would exclude another ? That other has a right to exclude him.

That which is now called aristocracy implies an inequality of rights ; but who are the persons that have a right to establish this inequality ? Will the rich exclude themselves ? No ! Will the poor exclude themselves ? No ! By what right then can any be excluded ? It would be a question, if any man, or class of men, have a right to exclude themselves ; but be this as it may, they cannot have the right to exclude another. The poor will not delegate such a right to the rich, nor the rich to the poor, and to assume it is not only to assume arbitrary power, but to assume a right to commit robbery. Personal rights, of which the right of voting for representatives is one, are a species of property of the most sacred kind ; and he that would employ his pecuniary property, or presume upon the influence it gives him, to dispossess or rob another of his property of rights, uses that pecuniary property as he would use fire-arms, and merits to have it taken from him.

Inequality of rights is created by a combination in one part of the community to exclude another part from its rights. Whenever it may be made an article of a constitution, or a law, that the right of voting, or of electing and being elected, shall appertain exclusively to persons possessing a certain quantity of property, be it little or much, it is a combination of the persons possessing that quantity, to exclude those who do not possess the same quantity. It is investing themselves with powers as a self-created part of society, to the exclusion of the rest.

It is always to be taken for granted, that those who oppose an equality of rights, never mean the exclusion should take place on themselves ; and in this view of the case, pardoning the vanity of the thing, aristocracy is a subject of laughter. This self-soothing vanity is encouraged by another idea not less selfish, which is,

that the opposers conceive they are playing a safe game, in which there is a chance to gain and none to lose ; that at any rate the doctrine of equality includes *them*, and that if they cannot get more rights than those whom they oppose and would exclude, they shall not have less. This opinion has already been fatal to thousands, who, not contented with *equal rights*, have sought more till they lost all, and experienced in themselves the degrading *inequality* they endeavored to fix upon others.

In any view of the case it is dangerous and impolitic, sometimes ridiculous, and always unjust, to make property the criterion of the right of voting. If the sum, or value of the property upon which the right is to take place be considerable, it will exclude a majority of the people, and unite them in a common interest against the government, and against those who support it, and as the power is always with the majority, they can overturn such a government and its supporters whenever they please.

If, in order to avoid this danger, a small quantity of property be fixed, as the criterion of the right, it exhibits liberty in disgrace, by putting it in competition with accident and insignificance. When a brood-mare shall fortunately produce a foal or a mule, that by being worth the sum in question, shall convey to its owner the right of voting, or by its death take it from him, in whom does the origin of such a right exist ? Is it in the man, or in the mule ? When we consider how many ways property may be acquired without merit, and lost without a crime, we ought to spurn the idea of making it a criterion of rights.

But the offensive part of the case is, that this exclusion from the right of voting implies a stigma on the moral character of the persons excluded ; and this is what no part of the community has a right to pronounce upon another part. No external circumstance can justify it ; wealth is no proof of moral character ; nor poverty of the want of it. On the contrary, wealth is often the presumptive evidence of dishonesty ; and poverty the negative evidence of innocence. If, therefore, property, whether little or much, be made a criterion, the means by which that property has been acquired, ought to be made a criterion also.

The only ground upon which exclusion from the right of voting is consistent with justice, would be to inflict it as a punishment for a certain time, upon those who should propose to take away that right from others. The right of voting for representatives is

the primary right by which other rights are protected. To take away this right is to reduce a man to slavery, for slavery consists in being subject to the will of another, and he that has not a vote in the election of representatives, is in this case. The proposal, therefore, to disfranchise any class of men is as criminal as the proposal to take away property. When we speak of right, we ought always to unite with it the idea of duties : rights become duties by reciprocity. The right which I enjoy it becomes my duty to guarantee to another, and he to me ; and those who violate the duty justly incur a forfeiture of the right.

In a political view of the case, the strength and permanent security of government is in proportion to the number of people interested in supporting it. The true policy, therefore, is to interest the whole by an equality of rights, for the danger arises from exclusions. It is possible to exclude men from the right of voting, but it is impossible to exclude them from the right of rebelling against that exclusion ; and when all other rights are taken away, the right of rebellion is made perfect.

While men could be persuaded they had no rights, or that rights appertained only to a certain class of men, or that government was a thing existing in right of itself, it was not difficult to govern them authoritatively. The ignorance in which they were held, and the superstition in which they were instructed, furnished the means of doing it ; but when the ignorance is gone, and the superstition with it ; when they perceive the imposition that has been acted upon them ; when they reflect that the cultivator and the manufacturer are the primary means of all the wealth that exists in the world, beyond what nature spontaneously produces ; when they begin to feel their consequence by their usefulness, and their right as members of society, it is then no longer possible to govern them as before. The fraud once detected cannot be reacted. To attempt it is to provoke derision or invite destruction.

That property will ever be unequal is certain. Industry, superiority of talents, or dexterity of management, extreme frugality, fortunate opportunities, or the opposite, or the mean of those things, will ever produce that effect, without having recourse to the harsh, ill-sounding names of avarice and oppression ; and besides this, there are some men who, though they do not despise wealth, will not stoop to the drudgery of the means of acquiring

it, nor will be troubled with it beyond their wants or their independence ; whilst in others there is an avidity to obtain it by every means not punishable ; it makes the sole business of their lives, and they follow it as a religion. All that is required, with respect to property, is to obtain it *honestly*, and not employ it *criminally* ; but it is always criminally employed, when it is made the criterion for exclusive rights.

In institutions that are purely pecuniary, such as that of a bank, or a commercial company, the rights of the members composing that company are wholly created by the property they invest therein ; and no other rights are represented in the government of that company, than what arise out of that property ; neither has that government cognizance of *any thing but property*.

But the case is totally different with respect to the institution of civil government, organized on the system of representation. Such a government has cognizance of *every thing*, and of *every man* as a member of the national society, whether he has property or not ; and, therefore, the principle requires that every man, and *every kind of right*, be represented, of which the right to acquire and to hold property is but one, and that not of the most essential kind. The protection of a man's person is more sacred than the protection of property ; and, besides this, the faculty of performing any kind of work or services by which he acquires a livelihood, or maintaining his family, is of the nature of property. It is property to him ; he has acquired it ; and it is as much the object of his protection, as exterior property, possessed without that faculty, can be the object of protection to another person.

I have always believed that the best security for property, be it much or little, is to remove from every part of the community, as far as can possibly be done, every cause of complaint, and every motive to violence ; and this can only be done by an equality of rights. When rights are secure, property is secure in consequence. But when property is made a pretence for unequal or exclusive rights, it weakens the right to hold the property, and provokes indignation and tumult ; for it is unnatural to believe that property can be secure under the guarantee of a society injured in its rights by the influence of that property.

Next to the injustice and ill policy of making property a pretence for exclusive rights, is the unaccountable absurdity of giving to mere *sound* the idea of property, and annexing to it certain

rights ; for what else is a *title* but sound ? Nature is often giving to the world some extraordinary men, who arrive at fame by merit and universal consent, such as Aristotle, Socrates, Plato, &c. They were truly great or noble. But when government sets up a manufactory of nobles, it is as absurd, as if she undertook to manufacture wise men. *Her nobles are all counterfeits.*

As property, honestly obtained, is best secured by an equality of rights, so ill-gotten property depends for protection on a monopoly of rights. He who has robbed another of his property, will next endeavor to disarm him of his rights, to secure that property ; for when the robber becomes the legislator he believes himself secure. That part of the government of England that is called the house of lords, was originally composed of persons who had committed the robberies of which I have been speaking. It was an association for the protection of the property they had stolen.

But besides the criminality of the origin of aristocracy, it has an injurious effect on the moral and physical character of man. Like slavery it debilitates the human faculties ; for as the mind, bowed down by slavery, loses in silence its elastic powers, so, in the contrary extreme, when it is buoyed up by folly, it becomes incapable of exerting them, and dwindles into imbecility. It is impossible that a mind employed upon ribands and titles can ever be great. The childishness of the objects consumes the man.

It is at all times necessary, and more particularly so during the progress of a revolution, and until right ideas confirm themselves by habit, that we frequently refresh our patriotism by reference to first principles. It is by tracing things to their origin that we learn to understand them : and it is by keeping that line and that origin always in view that we never forget them.

An inquiry into the origin of rights will demonstrate to us that *rights* are not *gifts* from one man to another, nor from one class of men to another ; for who is he who could be the first giver, or by what principle, or on what authority, could he possess the right of giving ? A declaration of rights is not a creation of them, nor a donation of them. It is a manifest of the principle by which they exist, followed by a detail of what the rights are ; for every civil right has a natural right for its foundation, and it includes the principle of a reciprocal guarantee of those rights from man to man. As, therefore, it is impossible to discover any origin of

rights otherwise than in the origin of man, it consequently follows, that rights appertain to man in right of his existence only, and must therefore be equal to every man. The principle of an *equality of rights* is clear and simple. Every man can understand it, and it is by understanding his rights that he learns his duties ; for where the rights of men are equal, every man must finally see the necessity of protecting the rights of others as the most effectual security for his own. But if in the formation of a constitution we depart from the principle of equal rights, or attempt any modification of it, we plunge into a labyrinth of difficulties from which there is no way out but by retreating. Where are we to stop ? Or by what principle are we to find out the point to stop at, that shall discriminate between men of the same country, part of whom shall be free, and the rest not ? If property is to be made the criterion, it is a total departure from every moral principle of liberty, because it is attaching rights to mere matter, and making man the agent of that matter. It is, moreover, holding up property as an apple of discord, and not only exciting but justifying war against it ; for I maintain the principle, that when property is used as an instrument to take away the rights of those who may happen not to possess property, it is used to an unlawful purpose, as fire-arms would be in a similar case.

In a state of nature all men are equal in rights, but they are not equal in power ; the weak cannot protect themselves against the strong. This being the case, the institution of civil society is for the purpose of making an equalization of powers that shall be parallel to, and a guarantee of, the equality of rights. The laws of a country, when properly constructed, apply to this purpose. Every man takes the arm of the law for his protection as more effectual than his own ; and therefore every man has an equal right in the formation of the government, and of the laws by which he is to be governed and judged. In extensive countries and societies, such as America and France, this right in the individual can only be exercised by delegation, that is, by election and representation ; and hence it is that the institution of representative government arises.

Hitherto, I have confined myself to matters of principle only. First, that hereditary government has not a right to exist ; that it cannot be established on any principle of right ; and that it is a

violation of all principle. Secondly, that government by election and representation has its origin in the natural and eternal rights of man ; for whether a man be his own lawgiver, as he would be in a state of nature ; or whether he exercises his portion of legislative sovereignty in his own person, as might be the case in small democracies where all could assemble for the formation of the laws by which they were to be governed ; or whether he exercises it in the choice of persons to represent him in a national assembly of representatives, the origin of the right is the same in all cases. The first, as is before observed, is defective in power ; the second, is practicable only in democracies of small extent ; the third, is the greatest scale upon which human government can be instituted.

Next to matters of *principle*, are matters of *opinion*, and it is necessary to distinguish between the two. Whether the rights of men shall be equal is not a matter of opinion but of right, and consequently of principle ; for men do not hold their rights as grants from each other, but each one in right of himself. Society is the guardian but not the giver. And, as in extensive societies, such as America and France, the right of the individual in matters of government, cannot be exercised but by election and representation, it consequently follows, that the only system of government, consistent with principle, where simple democracy is impracticable, is the representative system. But as to the organical part, or the manner in which the several parts of government shall be arranged and composed, it is altogether *matter of opinion*. It is necessary that all the parts be conformable with the *principle of equal rights* ; and so long as this principle be religiously adhered to, no very material error can take place, neither can any error continue long in that part that falls within the province of opinion.

In all matters of opinion, the social compact, or the principle by which society is held together, requires that the majority of opinions becomes the rule for the whole, and that the minority yields practical obedience thereto. This is perfectly conformable to the principle of equal rights ; for, in the first place, every man has a *right to give an opinion*, but no man has a right that his own should govern the rest. In the second place, it is not supposed to be known beforehand on which side of any question, whether for or against, any man's opinion will fall. He may

happen to be in a majority upon some questions, and in a minority upon others ; and by the same rule that he expects obedience in the one case, he must yield it in the other. All the disorders that have arisen in France, during the progress of the revolution, have had their origin, not in the *principle of equal rights*, but in the violation of that principle. The principle of equal rights has been repeatedly violated, and that not by the majority, but by the minority, and *that minority has been composed of men possessing property, as well as of men without property ; property, therefore, even upon the experience already had, is no more a criterion of character than it is of rights.* It will sometimes happen that the minority are right, and the majority are wrong, but as soon as experience proves this to be the case, the minority will increase to a majority, and the error will reform itself by the tranquil operation of freedom of opinion and equality of rights. Nothing, therefore, can justify an insurrection, neither can it ever be necessary, where rights are equal and opinions free.

Various methods will present themselves upon a question of this kind, and though experience is yet wanting to determine which is the best, it has, I think, sufficiently decided which is the worst. That is the worst, which in its deliberations and decisions is subject to the precipitancy and passion of an individual ; and when the whole legislature is crowded into one body, it is an individual in mass. In all cases of deliberation it is necessary to have a corps of reserve, and it would be better to divide the representation by lot into two parts, and let them revise and correct each other, than that the whole should sit together, and debate at once.

Representative government is not necessarily confined to any one particular form. The principle is the same in all the forms under which it can be arranged. The equal rights of the people is the root from which the whole springs, and the branches may be arranged as present opinion or future experience shall best direct. As to that *hospital of incurables*, (as Chesterfield calls it,) the British house of peers, it is an excrescence growing out of corruption ; and there is no more affinity or resemblance between any of the branches of a legislative body originating from the right of the people, and the aforesaid house of peers, than between a regular member of the human body and an ulcerated wen.

As to that part of government that is called the *executive*, it is necessary in the first place to fix a precise meaning to the word.

There are but two divisions into which power can be arranged. First, that of willing or decreeing the laws ; secondly, that of executing or putting them in practice. The former, corresponds to the intellectual faculties of the human mind, which reasons and determines what shall be done ; the second, to the mechanical powers of the human body, that puts that determination into practice. If the former decides, and the latter does not perform, it is a state of imbecility ; and if the latter acts without the predetermination of the former, it is a state of lunacy. The executive department is, therefore, official, and is subordinate to the legislative, as the body is to the mind, in a state of health ; for, it is impossible to conceive the idea of two sovereignties, a sovereignty to *will*, and a sovereignty to *act*. The executive is not invested with the power of deliberating whether it shall act or not ; it has no discretionary authority in the case ; for it can *act no other thing* than what the laws decree, and it is *obliged* to act conformably thereto ; and in this view of the case, the executive is made up of all the official departments that execute the laws, of which, that which is called the judiciary is the chief.

But mankind have conceived an idea that *some kind of authority* is necessary to *superintend* the execution of the laws and to see that they are faithfully performed ; and it is by confounding this superintending authority with the official execution that we get embarrassed about the term *executive power*.—All the parts in the governments of the United States of America that are called THE EXECUTIVE, are no other than authorities to superintend the execution of the laws ; and they are so far independent of the legislative, that they know the legislative only through the laws, and cannot be controlled or directed by it, through any other medium.

In what manner this superintending authority shall be appointed, or composed, is a matter that falls within the province of opinion. Some may prefer one method and some another ; and in all cases, where opinion only, and not principle is concerned, the majority of opinions forms the rule for all. There are, however, some things deducible from reason, and evidenced by experience, that serve to guide our decision upon the case. The one is, never to invest any individual with extraordinary power ; for

besides his being tempted to misuse it, it will excite contention and commotion in the nation for the office. Secondly, never to invest power long in the hands of any number of individuals. The inconveniences that may be supposed to accompany frequent changes, are less to be feared than the dangers that arise from long continuance.

I shall conclude this discourse with offering some observations on the means of *preserving liberty*; for it is not only necessary that we establish it, but that we preserve it.

It is, in the first place, necessary that we distinguish between the means made use of to overthrow despotism, in order to prepare the way for the establishment of liberty, and the means to be used after despotism is overthrown.

The means made use of in the first case are justified by necessity. Those means are, in general, insurrections; for whilst the established government of despotism continues in any country, it is scarcely possible that any other means can be used. It is also certain that in the commencement of a revolution, the revolutionary party permit to themselves a *discretionary exercise of power* regulated more by circumstances than by principle, which, were the practice to continue, liberty would never be established, or if established, would soon be overthrown. It is never to be expected in a revolution, that every man is to change his opinion at the same moment. There never yet was any truth or any principle so irresistibly obvious, that all men believed it at once. Time and reason must co-operate with each other to the final establishment of any principle; and, therefore, those who may happen to be first convinced, have not a right to persecute others, on whom conviction operates more slowly. The moral principle of revolutions is to instruct, not to destroy.

Had a constitution been established two years ago, (as ought to have been done,) the violences that have since desolated France and injured the character of the revolution, would, in my opinion, have been prevented. The nation would then have had a bond of union, and every individual would have known the line of conduct he was to follow. But, instead of this, a revolutionary government, a thing without either principle or authority, was substituted in its place; virtue and crime depended upon accident; and that which was patriotism one day, became treason the next. All these things have followed from the want of a

constitution ; for it is the nature and intention of a constitution to *prevent governing by party*, by establishing a common principle that shall limit and control the power and impulse of party, and that says to all parties, *thus far shalt thou go and no further*. But in the absence of a constitution, men look entirely to party ; and instead of principle governing party, party governs principle.

An avidity to punish is always dangerous to liberty. It leads men to stretch, to misinterpret, and to misapply even the best of laws. He that would make his own liberty secure, must guard even his enemy from oppression ; for if he violates this duty, he establishes a precedent that will reach to himself.

THOMAS PAINE.

Paris, July 1795.

SPEECH,

AS DELIVERED IN THE FRENCH NATIONAL CONVENTION, JULY 7,
1795, WHEREIN HE ALLUDES TO THE PRECEDING WORK.

ON the motion of Lanthenas. "That permission be granted to Thomas Paine, to deliver his sentiments on the declaration of rights and the constitution," Thomas Paine ascended the tribune; and no opposition being made to the motion, one of the secretaries, who stood by Mr. Paine, read his speech, of which the following is a literal translation :

CITIZENS, The effects of a malignant fever, with which I was afflicted during a rigorous confinement in the Luxembourg, have thus long prevented me from attending at my post in the bosom of the convention, and the magnitude of the subject under discussion, and no other consideration on earth, could induce me now to repair to my station.

A recurrence to the vicissitudes I have experienced, and the critical situations in which I have been placed in consequence of the French revolution, will throw upon what I now propose to submit to the convention, the most unequivocal proofs of my integrity, and the rectitude of those principles which have uniformly influenced my conduct.

In England I was proscribed for having vindicated the French revolution, and I have suffered a rigorous imprisonment in France

for having pursued a similar mode of conduct. During the reign of terrorism, I was a close prisoner for eight long months, and remained so above three months after the era of the 10th Thermidor. I ought, however, to state, that I was not persecuted by the *people* either of England or France. The proceedings in both countries were the effects of the despotism existing in their respective governments. But, even if my persecution had originated in the people at large, my principles and conduct would still have remained the same. Principles which are influenced and subject to the control of tyranny, have not their foundation in the heart.

A few days ago, I transmitted to you by the ordinary mode of distribution, a short treatise, entitled “Dissertations on the First Principles of Government.” This little work I did intend to have dedicated to the people of Holland, who, about the time I began to write it, were determined to accomplish a revolution in their government, rather than to the people of France, who had long before effected that glorious object. But there are, in the constitution which is about to be ratified by the convention, certain articles, and in the report which preceded it, certain points, so repugnant to reason, and incompatible with the true principles of liberty, as to render this treatise, drawn up for another purpose, applicable to the present occasion, and under this impression I presumed to submit it to your consideration.

If there be faults in the constitution, it were better to expunge them now, than to abide the event of their mischievous tendency; for certain it is, that the plan of the constitution which has been presented to you is not consistent with the grand object of the revolution, nor congenial to the sentiments of the individuals who accomplished it.

To deprive half the people in a nation of their rights as citizens, is an easy matter in theory or on paper, but it is a most dangerous experiment, and rarely practicable in the execution.

I shall now proceed to the observations I have to offer on this important subject; and I pledge myself that they shall be neither numerous nor diffusive.

In my apprehension, a constitution embraces two distinct parts or objects, the *principle* and the *practice*; and it is not only an essential, but an indispensable provision, that the practice should emanate from, and accord with, the principle. Now I main-

tain, that the converse of this proposition is the case in the plan of the constitution under discussion. The first article, for instance, of the *political state* of citizens, (v. Title ii. of the Constitution,) says :

“Every man born and resident in France, who, being twenty-one years of age, has inscribed his name on the civic register of his canton, and who has lived afterwards one year on the territory of the republic, and who pays any direct contribution whatsoever, real or personal, is a French citizen.”

I might here ask, if those only who come under the above description are to be considered as citizens, what designation do you mean to give the rest of the people? I allude to that portion of the people on whom the principal part of the labour falls, and on whom the weight of indirect taxation will in the event chiefly press. In the structure of the social fabric, this class of people are infinitely superior to that privileged order, whose only qualification is their wealth or territorial possessions. For what is trade without merchants? What is land without cultivation? And what is the produce of the land without manufactures? But to return to the subject.

In the first place, this article is incompatible with the three first articles of the declaration of rights, which precede the constitutional act.

The first article of the declaration of rights says :

“The end of society is the public good ; and the institution of government is to secure to every individual the enjoyment of his rights.

But the article of the constitution to which I have just adverted, proposes as the object of society, not the public good, or in other words, the good of *all*, but a partial good; or the good only of a *few*; and the constitution provides solely for the rights of this few, to the exclusion of the many.

The second article of the declaration of rights says :

“The rights of man in society are liberty, equality, and security of his person and property.”

But the article alluded to in the constitution has a direct tendency to establish the converse of this position, inasmuch as the persons excluded by this *inequality* can neither be said to possess liberty, nor security against oppression. They are consigned totally to the caprice and tyranny of the rest.

The third article of the declaration of rights says :

“ Liberty consists in such acts of volition, as are not injurious to others.”

But the article of the constitution, on which I have observed, breaks down this barrier. It enables the liberty of one part of society to destroy the freedom of the other.

Having thus pointed out the inconsistency of this article to the declaration of rights I shall proceed to comment on that part of the same article which makes a direct contribution a necessary qualification to the right of citizenship.

A modern refinement on the object of public revenue has divided the taxes, or contributions, into two classes, the *direct* and the *indirect*, without being able to define precisely the distinction, or difference between them, because the effect of both is the same.

Those are designated indirect taxes which fall upon the consumers of certain articles, on which the tax is imposed, because the tax being included in the price, the consumer pays it without taking notice of it.

The same observation is applicable to the territorial tax. The land proprietors, in order to reimburse themselves, will rack-rent their tenants : the farmer, of course, will transfer the obligation to the miller, by enhancing the price of grain ; the miller to the baker, by encreasing the price of flour ; and the baker to the consumer, by raising the price of bread. The territorial tax, therefore, though called *direct*, is, in its consequences, *indirect*.

To this tax the land proprietor contributes only in proportion to the quantity of bread and other provisions that are consumed in his own family. The deficit is furnished by the great mass of the community, which comprehends every individual of the nation.

From the logical distinction between the direct and indirect taxation, some emolument may result, I allow, to auditors of public accounts, &c. but to the people at large I deny that such a distinction (which by the way is without a difference) can be productive of any practical benefit. It ought not, therefore, to be admitted as a principle in the constitution.

Besides this objection, the provision in question does not affect to define, secure or establish, the right of citizenship. It consigns to the caprice or discretion of the legislature the power of pro-

nouncing who shall, or shall not, exercise the functions of a citizen; and this may be done effectually, either by the imposition of a *direct* or *indirect* tax, according to the selfish views of the legislators, or by the mode of collecting the taxes so imposed.

Neither a tenant who occupies an extensive farm, nor a merchant or manufacturer, who may have embarked a large capital in their respective pursuits, can ever, according to this system, attain the pre-emption of a citizen. On the other hand, any upstart, who has, by succession or management, got possession of a few acres of land, or a miserable tenement, may exultingly exercise the functions of a citizen, although perhaps neither possesses a hundredth part of the worth or property of a simple mechanic, nor contributes in any proportion to the exigences of the state.

The contempt in which the old government held mercantile pursuits, and the obloquy that attached on merchants and manufacturers, contributed not a little to its embarrassments, and its eventual subversion; and, strange to tell, though the mischiefs arising from this mode of conduct are so obvious, yet an article is proposed for your adoption, which has a manifest tendency to restore a defect inherent in the monarchy.

I shall now proceed to the second article of the same title, with which I shall conclude my remarks.

The second article says, "Every French soldier, who shall have served one or more campaigns in the cause of liberty, is deemed a citizen of the republic, without any respect or reference to other qualifications."

It should seem, that in this article, the committee were desirous of extricating themselves from a dilemma into which they had been plunged by the preceding article. When men depart from an established principle, they are compelled to resort to trick and subterfuge, always shifting their means to preserve the unity of their objects; and as it rarely happens that the first expedient makes amends for the prostitution of principle, they must call in aid a second, of a more flagrant nature, to supply the deficiency of the former. In this manner legislators go on accumulating error upon error, and artifice upon artifice, until the mass becomes so bulky and incongruous, and their embarrassment so desperate, that they are are compelled, as their last expedient, to resort to the very principle they had violated. The committee were precisely

in this predicament, when they framed this article ; and to me, I confess, their conduct appears specious rather than efficacious.

It was not for himself alone, but for his family, that the French citizen, at the dawn of the revolution, (for then indeed every man was considered a citizen) marched soldier-like to the frontiers, and repelled a foreign invasion. He had it not in his contemplation, that he should enjoy liberty for the residue of his earthly career, and by his own act preclude his offspring from that inestimable blessing. No ! He wished to leave it as an inheritance to his children, and that they also might hand it down to their latest posterity. If a Frenchman, who united in his person the character of a soldier and a citizen, was now to return from the army to his peaceful habitation, he must address his family in this manner :

“ Sorry I am, that I cannot leave to you a small portion of what I have acquired by exposing my person to the ferocity of our enemies, and defeating their machinations. I have helped to establish the republic, and, painful the reflection, all the laurels which I have won in the field are blasted, and all the privileges to which my exertions have entitled me, extend not beyond the period of my own existence !” Thus the measure that has been adopted by way of subterfuge, falls short of what the framers of it speculated upon ; for in conciliating the affections of the *soldier*, they have subjected the *father* to the most pungent sensations, by obliging him to adopt a generation of slaves.

Citizens, a great deal has been urged respecting insurrections. I am confident that no man has a greater abhorrence of them than myself, and I am sorry that any insinuations should have been thrown out against me, as a promoter of violence of any kind. The whole tenor of my life and conversation gives the lie to those calumnies, and proves me to be a friend to order, truth and justice.

I hope you will attribute this effusion of my sentiments to my anxiety for the honor and success of the revolution. I have no interest distinct from that which has a tendency to meliorate the condition of mankind. The revolution, as far as it respects myself, has been productive of more loss and persecution than it is possible for me to describe, or for you to indemnify. But with respect to the subject under consideration, I could not refrain from declaring my sentiments.

In my opinion, if you subvert the basis of the revolution, if you dispense with principles, and substitute expedients, you will ex-

tinguish that enthusiasm and energy which have hitherto been the life and soul of the revolution ; and you will substitute in its place nothing but a cold indifference and self-interest, which will again degenerate into intrigue, cunning, and effeminacy.

But to discard all considerations of a personal and subordinate nature, it is essential to the well-being of the republic, that the practical or organic part of the constitution should correspond with its principles ; and as this does not appear to be the case in the plan that has been presented to you, it is absolutely necessary that it should be submitted to the revision of a committee, who should be instructed to compare it with the declaration of rights, in order to ascertain the difference between the two, and to make such alterations as shall render them perfectly consistent and compatible with each other.

TO MR. SECRETARY DUNDAS.



LONDON, JUNE 6, 1792

SIR,

As you opened the debate in the house of commons, May 25th, on the proclamation for suppressing publications, which that proclamation (without naming any) calls wicked and seditious : and as you applied those opprobrious epithets to the works entitled *Rights of Man*, I think it unnecessary to offer any other reason for addressing this letter to you.

I begin, then, at once, by declaring, that I do not believe there are to be found in the writings of any author, ancient or modern, on the subject of government, a spirit of greater benignity, and a stronger inculcation of moral principles than in those which I have published. They come, sir, from a man, who, by having lived in different countries, and under different systems of government, and who, being intimate in the construction of them, is a better judge of the subject than it is possible that you, from the want of those opportunities can be ; and besides this, they come from a heart that knows not how to beguile.

I will further say, that when that moment arrives in which the best consolation that shall be left, will be looking back on some past actions, more virtuous and more meritorious than the rest, I shall then with happiness remember, among other things that I have written the *Rights of Man*. As to what proclamations, or prosecutions, or placemen, and place expectants, those who possess, or those who are gaping for office, may say of them, it will not alter their character, either with the world or with me.

Having, sir, made this declaration, I shall proceed to remark, not particularly on your speech, but on any one to which your motion gave rise. To begin with Mr. Adam.

He accuses me of not having done the very thing that I have done.

In his speech, (see the Morning Chronicle of May 26,) he says, "that he had well considered the subject of constitutional publications, and was by no means ready to say that books of science upon government though recommending a doctrine, or system different from the form of our constitution were fit objects of prosecution; that if he did, he must condemn Harrington for his Oceana, Sir Thomas Moore for his Utopia, and Hume for his Idea of a Perfect Commonwealth. But the publication of Mr. Paine reviled what was most sacred in the constitution, destroyed every principle of subordination, and established nothing in their room."

I readily saw that Mr. Adam had not read the second part of the Rights of Man; and I am put under the necessity either of submitting to an erroneous charge, or of justifying myself against it; and certainly shall prefer the latter. If, then, I shall prove to Mr. Adam, that in my reasoning upon systems of government, in the second part of the Rights of Man, I have shown, I think, as clearly as words can convey ideas, a certain system of government; and that not existing in theory only, but already in established practice, and systematically and practically free from all the vices and defects of the English government, and capable of producing more happiness to the people, and that also with an eightieth part of the taxes, which the present English system of government consumes; I hope he will do me the justice when he next goes to the house, to acknowledge he had been mistaken in saying, that I had established nothing, and had destroyed every principle of subordination. I now come to the point.

In the second part of the Rights of Man I have distinguished government into two classes or systems: the hereditary and the representative systems.

In the first part of the Rights of Man, I have shown, and it cannot be refuted, that there does not exist a right to establish hereditary government.

In the second part of the Rights of Man I have not repeated those arguments, because they are irrefutable, but have confined myself to show the defects of hereditary government, or hereditary succession, that it must, from the nature of it, throw government into the hands of men unworthy of it, either from want of principle or capacity.

To show the absurdity of the hereditary system still more strongly, I will now put the following case : take any fifty men promiscuously, and it will be very extraordinary, if, out of that number, more than one man should be found, whose principles and talents taken together (for some might have principles, and others have talents) would render him a person truly fitted to fill any very extraordinary office of national trust. If then such a fitness of character could not be expected to be found in more than one person out of fifty, it would happen but once in a thousand years to the eldest son of any one family, admitting each on an average, to hold the office twenty years. Mr. Adam talks of something in the constitution which he calls most sacred ; but I hope he does not mean hereditary succession, a thing which appears to me a violation of every order of nature and of common sense.

When I look into history and see the multitudes of men, otherwise virtuous, who have died, and whose families have been ruined, in defence of knaves and fools, and which they would not have done had they reasoned at all upon the system ; I do not know a greater good that an individual can render to mankind, than to endeavour to break the chains of political superstition. Those chains are now dissolving fast, and proclamations and persecutions will serve but to hasten that dissolution.

Having thus spoken of the hereditary system as a bad system, and subject to every possible defect, I now come to the representative system ; and this Mr. Adam will find stated in the second part of the Rights of Man, not only as the best, but as the only theory of government under which the liberties of a people can be permanently secure.

But it is needless now to talk of mere theory, since there is already a government in full practice, established upon that theory ; or in other words, upon the rights of man, and has been so for almost twenty years. Mr. Pitt, in a speech of his some short time since, said, " That there never did, and never could exist a government established upon those rights, and that if it began at noon, it would end at night." Mr. Pitt has not yet arrived at the degree of a school boy in this species of knowledge. His practice has been confined to means of extorting the revenue, and his boast has been—how much ? Whereas the boast of the system of government that I am speaking of, is not how much, but how little.

The system of government purely representative, unmixed with any thing of hereditary nonsense, began in America. I will now compare the effects of that system of government, with the system of government in England, both during, and since the close of the war.

So powerful is the representative system ; first, by combining and consolidating all the parts of a country together, however great the extent ; and, secondly, by admitting of none but men properly qualified into the government, or dismissing them if they prove otherwise, that America was enabled thereby totally to defeat and overthrow all the schemes and projects of the hereditary government of England against her. As the establishment of the revolution and independence of America is a proof of this fact. it is needless to enlarge upon it.

I now come to the comparative effect of the two systems since the close of the war, and I request Mr. Adam to attend to it.

America had internally sustained the ravages of upwards of seven years of war, which England had not. England sustained only the expense of the war : whereas America sustained not only the expense, but the destruction of property committed by both armies. Not a house was built during that period, and many thousands were destroyed.

The farms and plantations along the coast of the country, for more than a thousand miles, were laid waste. Her commerce was annihilated. Her ships were either taken or had rotted within her own harbors. The credit of her funds had fallen upwards of ninety per cent., that is, an original hundred pounds would not sell for ten pounds. In short, she was apparently put back a hundred years when the war closed ; which was not the case with England.

But such was the event, that the same representative system of government, though since better organized, which enabled her to conquer, enabled her also to recover, and she now presents a more flourishing condition, and a more happy and harmonized society under that system of government, than any country in the world can boast under any other. Her towns are rebuilt much better than before ; her farms and plantations are in higher improvement than ever ; her commerce is spread over the world, and her funds have risen from less than ten pounds the hundred to upwards of one hundred and twenty. Mr. Pitt and his colleagues, talk of

the things that have happened in his boyish administration, without knowing what greater things have happened elsewhere, and under other systems of government.

I next come to state the expense of the two systems, as they now stand in each of the countries ; but it may first be proper to observe, that government in America is what it ought to be, a matter of honor and trust, and not made a trade of for the purpose of lucre.

The whole amount of nett taxes in England (exclusive of the expense of collections, of drawbacks, of seizures, and condemnations, of fines and penalties, of fees of office, of litigations and informers, which are some of the blessed means of enforcing them) is seventeen millions. Of this sum about nine millions go for the payment of the interest of the national debt, and the remainder, being about eight millions, is for the current annual expenses. Thus much for one side of the case. I now come to the other.

The expense of the several departments of the general representative government of the United States of America, extending over a space of country nearly ten times larger than England, is two hundred and ninety-four thousand five hundred and fifty-eight dollars, which at 4s. 6d. per dollar, is 66,305*l.* 11*s.* sterling, and is thus apportioned ;

Expense of the Executive Department.

The office of president, for which the president

receives nothing for himself	-	-	-	5,625 <i>l.</i>	0 <i>s.</i>
Vice-president	-	-	-	1,125	0
Chief-justice	-	-	-	900	0
Five associate justices	-	-	-	3,937	10
Nineteen judges of districts, and the attorney-general	-	-	-	6,873	15

Legislative Department.

Members of congress at 6 dolls. (1*l.* 7*s.*) per day, their secretaries, clerks, chaplains, messengers, door-keepers, &c.

25,515*l.* 0

Treasury Department.

Secretary, assistant, comptroller, auditor, treasurer, register, and loan-office keeper in each state, together with all necessary clerks, office keepers, &c.

12,825 0

Amount carried forward 56,801*l.* 5*s.*

Amount bro't forward	56,301 <i>l.</i>	5 <i>s.</i>
<i>Department of State, including Foreign Affairs.</i>		
Secretary, clerks, &c.	1 406	5
<i>Department of War.</i>		
Secretary, clerks, paymasters, commissioners, &c.	1,462	10
<i>Commissioners for settling old accounts.</i>		
The whole board, clerks, &c.	2,598	15
<i>Incidental and contingent expenses.</i>		
For fire-wood, stationary, printing, &c.	4,036	16
	<hr/> 66,305 <i>l.</i> 11 <i>s.</i>	

On account of the incursions of the Indians on the back settlements, congress is obliged at this time to keep six thousand militia in pay, in addition to a regiment of foot, and a battalion of artillery, which it always keeps; and this increases the expense of the war-department to 390,000 dollars, which is 87,795*l.* sterling, but when peace shall be concluded with the Indians, the greatest part of this expense will cease, and the total amount of the expense of government, including that of the army, will not amount to 100,000*l.* which, as has been already stated, is but an eightieth part of the expenses of the English government.

I request Mr. Adam and Mr. Dundas, and all those who are talking of constitutions, and blessings, and kings, and lords, and the Lord knows what, to look at this statement. Here is a form and system of government, that is better organized and better administered than any government in the world, and that for less than one hundred thousand pounds per annum, and yet every member of congress receives, as a compensation for his time and attendance on public business, one pound seven shillings per day, which is at the rate of nearly five hundred pounds a-year.

This is a government that has nothing to fear. It needs no proclamations to deter people from writing and reading. It needs no political superstition to support it. It was by encouraging discussion and rendering the press free upon all subjects of government, that the principles of government became understood in America, and the people are now enjoying the present blessings under it. You hear of no riots, tumults and disorders in that country; because there exists no cause to produce them. Those things are never the effect of freedom, but of restraint, oppression, and excessive taxation.

In America, there is not that class of poor and wretched people that are so numerously dispersed all over England, who are to be told by a proclamation, that they are happy ; and this is in a great measure to be accounted for, not by the difference of proclamations, but by the difference of governments and the difference of taxes between that country and this. What the laboring people of that country earn, they apply to their own use, and to the education of their children, and do not pay it away in taxes as fast as they earn it, to support court extravagance, and a long enormous list of placemen and pensioners ; and besides this, they have learned the manly doctrine of reverencing themselves, and consequently of respecting each other ; and they laugh at those imaginary beings called kings and lords, and all the fraudulent trumpery of courts.

When placemen and pensioners, or those who expect to be such, are lavish in praise of a government, it is not a sign of its being a good one. The pension-list alone in England (see sir John Sinclair's History of the Revenue, p. 6, of the Appendix) is one hundred and seven thousand four hundred and four pounds, which is more than the expenses of the whole government of America amount to ; and I am now more convinced than before, that the offer that was made to me of a thousand pounds for the copy-right of the second part of the Rights of Man, together with the remaining copy-right of the first part, was to have effected, by a quick suppression, what is now attempted to be done by a prosecution. The connexion which the person, who made that offer, has with the king's printing-office, may furnish part of the means of inquiring into this affair, when the ministry shall please to bring their prosecution to issue. But to return to my subject.

I have said in the second part of the Rights of Man, and I repeat it here, that the service of any man, whether called king, president, senator, legislator or any thing else, cannot be worth more to any country, in the regular routine of office, than ten thousand pounds per annum. We have a better man in America, and more of a gentleman, than any king I ever knew of, who does not occasion even half that expense ; for though the salary is fixed at 5625*l.* he does not accept it, and it is only the incidental expenses that are paid out of it. The name by which a man is called is of itself but an empty thing. It is worth and character

alone which can render him valuable, for without this, kings and lords, and presidents, are but jingling names.

But without troubling myself about constitutions of government, I have shown in the second part of the Rights of Man. that an alliance may be formed between England, France and America, and that the expenses of government in England may be put back to one million and a half, *viz.*

Civil expense of government	-	500,000 <i>l.</i>
Army	- - - - -	500,000
Navy	- - - - -	500,000

1,500,000*l.*

And even this sum is fifteen times greater than the expenses of government are in America ; and it is also greater than the whole peace establishment of England amounted to, about an hundred years ago. So much has the weight and oppression of taxes increased since the revolution, and especially since the year 1714.

To show that the sum of 500,000*l.* is sufficient to defray all civil expenses of government, I have in that work annexed the following estimate for any country of the same extent as England.

In the first place, three hundred representatives, fairly elected, are sufficient for all the purposes to which legislation can apply, and preferable to a larger number.

If then an allowance, at the rate of 500*l.* per annum be made to every representative, deducting for non-attendance the expense, if the whole number attended six-months each year, would be

75,000*l.*

The official departments could not exceed the following number, with their salaries, *viz.*

Three officers	at 10,000 <i>l.</i> each	30,000
Ten ditto	at 5,000 "	50,000
Twenty ditto	at 2,000 "	40,000
Forty ditto	at 1,000 "	40,000
Two hundred ditto	at 500 "	100,000
Three hundred ditto	at 200 "	60,000
Five hundred ditto	at 100 "	50,000
Seven hundred ditto	at 75 "	52,500

497,500*l.*

If a nation chose, it might deduct four per cent, from all the offices, and make one of twenty thousand pounds per annum, and style the person who should fill it, king or majesty, or give him any other title.

Taking, however, this sum of one million and an half, as an abundant supply for all the expenses of government, under any form whatever, there will remain a surplus of nearly six millions and an half out of the present taxes, after paying the interest of the national debt : and I have shown in the second part of the Rights of Man what appears to me, the best mode of applying the surplus money ; for I am now speaking of expenses and savings, and not of systems of government.

I have, in the first place, estimated the poor rates at two millions annually, and shown that the first effectual step would be to abolish the poor rates entirely (which would be a saving of two millions to the housekeepers,) and to remit four millions out of the surplus taxes to the poor, to be paid to them in money in proportion to the number of children in each family, and the number of aged persons.

I have estimated the number of persons of both sexes in England of fifty years of age and upwards at 420,000, and have taken one third of this number, viz. 140,000 to be poor people.

To save long calculations, I have taken 70,000 of them to be fifty years of age, and under sixty ; and the others to be sixty years and upwards ; and to allow six pounds per annum to the former class, and ten pounds per annum to the latter. The expense of which will be,

Seventy thousand persons at 6 <i>l.</i> per annum	-	420,000 <i>l.</i>
Seventy thousand persons at 10 <i>l.</i> per annum	-	700,000
		<hr/> 1,120,000 <i>l.</i>

There will then remain of the four millions, two millions eight hundred and eighty thousand pounds. I have stated two different methods of appropriating this money. The one is to pay it in proportion to the number of children in each family, at the rate of three or four pounds per annum for each child ; the other is to apportion it according to the expense of living in different countries ; but in either of these cases it would, together with the allowance to be made to the aged, completely take off taxes from one third of all the families in England, besides relieving all the other families from the burden of poor rates.

The whole number of families in England, allotting five souls to each family, is one million four hundred thousand, of which take one third, *viz.* 466,666 to be poor families, who now pay four millions of taxes, and that the poorest pays at least four guineas a-year; and that the other thirteen millions are paid by the other two-thirds. The plan, therefore, as stated in the work, is first to remit or pay, as is already stated, this sum of four millions to the poor, because it is impossible to separate them from the others in the present mode of collecting taxes on articles of consumption; and, secondly, to abolish the poor rates, the house and window-light tax, and to change the commutation tax into a progressive tax, on large estates, the particulars of all which are set forth in the work.

I will conclude this part of my letter with an extract from the second part of the Rights of Man, which Mr. Dundas (a man rolling in luxury at the expense of the nation) has branded with the epithet of "wicked."

"By the operation of this plan, the poor laws, those instruments of civil torture, will be superseded, and the wasteful expense of litigation prevented. The hearts of the humane will not be shocked by ragged and hungry children, and persons of seventy and eighty years of age begging for bread. The dying poor will not be dragged from place to place, to breathe their last, as a reprisal of parish upon parish. Widows will have a maintenance for their children, and not be carted away, on the death of their husbands, like culprits and criminals, and children will no longer be considered as increasing the distresses of their parents. The haunts of the wretched will be known, because it will be to their advantage, and the number of petty crimes, the offspring of poverty and distress will be lessened. The poor as well as the rich, will then be interested in the support of government, and the cause and apprehension of riots and tumults will cease. Ye who sit in ease, and solace yourselves in plenty, and such there are in Turkey and Russia, as well as in England, and who say to yourselves, *are we not well off?* have ye thought of these things? when ye do, ye will cease to speak and feel for yourselves alone." Rights of Man, part ii.

After this remission of four millions be made, and the poor rates and houses and window-light tax be abolished, and the commutation tax changed, there will still remain nearly one million

and a half of surplus taxes ; and as by an alliance between England, France and America, armies and navies will, in a great measure be rendered unnecessary, and as men who have either been brought up in, or long habited to, those lines of life, are still citizens of a nation in common with the rest, and have a right to participate in all plans of national benefit, it is proposed in that work (*Rights of Man*, part ii.) to apply annually 507,000*l.* out of the surplus taxes to this purpose, in the following manner :

To fifteen thousand disbanded soldiers, 3 <i>s.</i> per week, clear of deductions, during life	-	117,000 <i>l.</i>
Additional pay to the remaining soldiers per annum		19,500
To the officers of the disbanded corps, during life, the sum of	- - - -	117,000
To fifteen thousand disbanded sailors, 3 <i>s.</i> per week during life		117,000
Additional pay to the remaining sailors		19,500
To the officers of the disbanded part of the navy, during life	- -	117,000
		<hr/> 507,000 <i>l.</i>

The limits to which it is proper to confine this letter, will not admit of my entering into further particulars. I address it to Mr. Dundas because he took the lead in the debate, and he wishes, I suppose to appear conspicuous ; but the purport of it is to justify myself from the charge which Mr. Adam has made.

This gentleman, as has been observed in the beginning of this letter, considers the writings of Harrington, More and Hume, as justifiable and legal publications, because they reasoned by comparison, though in so doing they showed plans and systems of government, not only different from, but preferable to, that of England, and he accuses me of endeavouring to confuse, instead of producing a system in the room of that which I had reasoned by comparison of the representative system against the hereditary system ; but I have gone further ; for I have produced an instance of a government established entirely on the representative system, under which greater happiness is enjoyed, much fewer taxes required, and much higher credit is established, than under the system of government in England. The funds in England have arisen since the war only from 54*l.* to 97*l.* and they have been

down since the proclamation, to 87*l.* whereas the funds in America rose in the mean time from 10*l.* to 120*l.*

His charge against me of "destroying every principle of subordination," is equally as groundless ; which even a single paragraph from the work will prove, and which I shall here quote :

"Formerly when divisions arose respecting government, recourse was had to the sword, and a civil war ensued. That savage custom is exploded by the new system, and recourse is had to a national convention. Discussion, and the general will, arbitrates the question, and to this private opinion yields with a good grace, and order is preserved uninterrupted." Rights of Man, part ii.

That two different charges should be brought at the same time, the one by a member of the legislature, for not doing a certain thing, and the other by the attorney-general for doing it, is a strange jumble of contradiction. I have now justified myself, or the work rather, against the first, by stating the case in this letter, and the justification of the other will be undertaken in its proper place. But in any case the work will go on.

I shall now conclude this letter with saying, that the only objection I found against the plan and principles contained in the second part of the Rights of Man when I had written the book, was, that they would beneficially interest at least ninety-nine persons out of every hundred throughout the nation, and therefore would not leave sufficient room for men to act from the direct and disinterested principles of honor ; but the prosecution now commenced has fortunately removed that objection, and the approvers and protectors of that work now feel the immediate impulse of honor, added to that of national interest.

I am, Mr. Dundas,

Not your obedient humble servant,

But to the contrary,

THOMAS PAINE

THE
DECLINE AND FALL
OF THE
ENGLISH SYSTEM OF FINANCE

"On the verge, nay even in the gulf of bankruptcy."
Debates in Parliament.

NOTHING, they say, is more certain than death, and nothing more uncertain than the time of dying ; yet we can always fix a period beyond which man cannot live, and within some moment of which he will die. We are enabled to do this, not by any spirit of prophecy, or foresight into the event, but by observation of what has happened in all cases of human or animal existence. If then any other subject, such, for instance, as a system of finance, exhibits in its progress a series of symptoms indicating decay, its final dissolution is certain, and the period of it can be calculated from the symptoms it exhibits.

Those who have hitherto written on the English system of finance, (the funding system,) have been uniformly impressed with the idea that its downfall would happen *some time or other*. They took, however, no data for their opinion, but expressed it predictively, or merely as opinion, from a conviction that the perpetual duration of such a system was a natural impossibility. It is in this manner that Dr. Price has spoken of it ; and Smith, in his *Wealth of Nations*, has spoken in the same manner ; that is,

merely as opinion without data. "The progress," says Smith, "of the enormous debts, which at present oppress, and will in the long run *most probably ruin*, all the great nations of Europe, (he should have said *governments*) has been pretty uniform." But this general manner of speaking, though it might make some impression, carried with it no conviction.

It is not my intention to predict any thing; but I will show from data already known, from symptoms and facts which the English funding system has already exhibited publicly, that it will not continue to the end of Mr. Pitt's life, supposing him to live the usual age of a man. How much sooner it may fall, I leave to others to predict.

Let financiers diversify systems of credit as they will, it is nevertheless true, that every system of credit is a system of paper money. Two experiments have already been had upon paper money; the one in America, the other in France. In both those cases the whole capital was emitted, and that whole capital, which in America was called continental money, and in France assignats, appeared in circulation; the consequence of which was, that the quantity became so enormous, and so disproportioned to the quantity of population, and to the quantity of objects upon which it could be employed, that the market, if I may so express it, was glutted with it, and the value of it fell. Between five and six years determined the fate of those experiments. The same fate would have happened to gold and silver, could gold and silver have been issued in the same abundant manner as paper had been, and confined within the country as paper money always is, by having no circulation out of it; or, to speak on a larger scale, the same thing would happen in the world, could the world be glutted with gold and silver, as America and France has been with paper.

The English system differs from that of America and France in this one particular, that its capital is kept out of sight; that is, it does not appear in circulation. Were the whole capital of the national debt, which at the time I write this, is almost one hundred millions of pounds sterling, to be emitted in assignats or bills, and that whole quantity put into circulation, as was done in America and in France, those English assignats, or bills, would soon sink in value as those of America and France have done; and that in a greater degree, because the quantity of them would be more disproportioned to the quantity of population in England,

than was the case in either of the other two countries. A nominal pound sterling in such bills would not be worth one penny.

But though the English system, by thus keeping the capital out of sight, is preserved from hasty destruction, as in the case of America and France, it nevertheless approaches the same fate, and will arrive at it with the same certainty, though by a slower progress. The difference is altogether in the degree of speed by which the two systems approach their fate, which, to speak in round numbers, is as twenty is to one; that is, the English system, that of funding the capital instead of issuing it, contained within itself a capacity of enduring twenty times longer than the systems adopted by America and France; and at the end of that time it would arrive at the same common grave, the Potter's Field, of paper money.

The datum, I take for this proposition of twenty to one, is the difference between a capital and the interest at five per cent. Twenty times the interest is equal to the capital. The accumulation of paper money in England is in proportion to the accumulation of the interest upon every new loan; and, therefore, the progress to the dissolution is twenty times slower than if the capital were to be emitted and put into circulation immediately. Every twenty years in the English system is equal to one year in the French and American systems.

Having thus stated the duration of the two systems, that of funding upon interest, and that of emitting the whole capital without funding, to be as twenty to one, I come to examine the symptoms of decay, approaching to dissolution, that the English system has already exhibited, and to compare them with similar systems in the French and American Systems.

The English funding system began one hundred years ago; in which time there has been six wars, including the war that ended in 1697.

1. The war that ended, as I have just said, in 1697.
2. The war that began in 1702.
3. The war that began in 1739.
4. The war that began in 1756.
5. The American war, that began in 1775.
6. The present war, that began in 1793.

The national debt, at the conclusion of the war, which ended in 1697, was twenty-one millions and an half. (See *Smith's Wealth*

of Nations, chapter on public debts.) We now see it approaching fast to four hundred millions. If between these two extremes of twenty-one millions and four hundred millions, embracing the several expenses of all the including wars, there exists some common ratio that will ascertain arithmetically the amount of the debts at the end of each war, as certainly as the fact is known to be, that ratio will in like manner determine what the amount of the debt will be in all future wars, and will ascertain the period within which the funding system will expire in a bankruptcy of the government; for the ratio I allude to, is the ratio which the nature of the thing has established for itself.

Hitherto no idea has been entertained that any such ratio existed, or could exist, that could determine a problem of this kind, that is, that could ascertain, without having any knowledge of the fact, what the expense of any former war had been, or what the expense of any future war would be; but it is nevertheless true that such a ratio does exist, as I shall show, and also the mode of applying it.

The ratio I allude to is not in Arithmetical progression like the numbers

2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9;

nor yet in geometrical progression, like the numbers

2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64, 128, 256;

but it is in the series of one half upon each preceding number; like the numbers

8, 12, 18, 27, 40, 60, 90, 135.

Any person can perceive that the second number, 12, is produced by the preceding number, 8, and half 8; and that the third number, 18, is in like manner produced by the preceding number, 12, and half 12; and so on for the rest. They can also see how rapidly the sums increase as the ratio proceeds. The difference between the two first numbers is but four; but the difference between the two last is forty-five: and from thence they may see with what immense rapidity the national debt has increased, and will continue to increase, till it exceeds the ordinary powers of calculation, and loses itself in cyphers.

I come now to apply the ratio as a rule to determine all the cases.

I began with the war that ended in 1697, which was the war in which the funding system began. The expense of that war

was twenty-one millions and an half. In order to ascertain the expense of the next war, I add to twenty-one millions and an half, the half thereof (ten millions and three quarters) which makes thirty-two millions and a quarter for the expense of that war. This thirty-two millions and a quarter, added to the former debt of twenty-one millions and an half, carries the national debt to fifty-three millions and three quarters. Smith, (chapter on Public Debts,) says, that the national debt was at this time fifty-three millions.

I proceed to ascertain the expense of the next war, that of 1739, by adding, as in the former case one half to the expense of the preceding war. The expense of the preceding war, was thirty-two millions and a quarter; for the sake of even numbers, say, thirty-two millions; the half of which (16) makes forty-eight millions for the expense of that war.

I proceed to ascertain the expense of the war of 1756, by adding, according to the ratio, one half to the expense of the preceding war. The expense of the preceding war was taken at 48 millions, the half of which (24) makes 72 millions for the expense of that war. Smith, (chapter on Public Debts,) says, the expense of the war of 1756, was 72 millions and a quarter.

I proceed to ascertain the expense of the American war, of 1775, by adding, as in the former cases, one half to the expense of the preceding war. The expense of the preceding war was 72 millions, the half of which (36) makes 108 millions for the expense of that war. In the last edition of Smith, (chapter on Public Debts,) he says, the expense of the American war was *more than an hundred millions*.

I come now to ascertain the expense of the present war, supposing it to continue as long as former wars have done, and the funding system not to break up before that period. The expense of the preceding war was 108 millions, the half of which (54) makes 162 millions for the expense of the present war. It gives symptoms of going beyond this sum, supposing the funding system not to break up; for the loans of the last year and of the present year, are twenty-two millions each, which exceeds the ratio compared with the loans of the preceding war. It will not be from the inability of procuring loans that the system will break up. On the contrary, it is the facility with which loans can be procured, that hastens that event. The loans are altogether paper transactions;

and it is the excess of them that brings on, with accelerating speed, that progressive depreciation of funded paper money that will dissolve the funding system.

I proceed to ascertain the expense of future wars, and I do this merely to show the impossibility of the continuance of the funding system, and the certainty of its dissolution.

The expense of the next war after the present war, according to the ratio which ascertained the preceding cases, will be

	243 millions.
Expense of the second war	364
————— third war	546
————— fourth war	819
————— fifth war	1228
	—————
	3200 millions.

which, at only four per cent. will require taxes to the nominal amount of one hundred and twenty-eight millions to pay the annual interest, besides the interest of the present debt, and the expenses of government, which are not included in this account. Is there a man so mad, so stupid, as to suppose this system can continue?

When I first conceived the idea of seeking for some common ratio that should apply as a rule of measurement to all the cases of the funding system, so far as to ascertain the several stages of its approach to dissolution, I had no expectation that any ratio could be found that would apply with so much exactness as this does. I was led to the idea merely by observing that the funding system was a thing in continual progression, and that whatever was in a state of progression might be supposed to admit of, at least some general ratio of measurement, that would apply without any very great variation. But who could have supposed that falling systems, or falling opinions, admitted of a ratio apparently as true as the descent of falling bodies? I have not *made* the ratio any more than Newton made the ratio of gravitation. I have only discovered it, and explained the mode of applying it.

To show at one view the rapid progression of the funding system to destruction, and to expose the folly of those who blindly believe in its continuance, and who artfully endeavour to impose that belief upon others, I exhibit in the annexed table, the expense of each of the six wars since the funding system began, as ascer-

tained by the ratio, and the expense of the six wars yet to come, ascertained by the same ratio.

FIRST SIX WARS.			SECOND SIX WARS.		
1	-	21 millions	1	-	243 millions
2	-	33 millions	2	-	364 millions
3	-	48 millions	3	-	546 millions
4	-	72 millions*	4	-	819 millions
5	-	108 millions	5	-	1228 millions
6	-	162 millions	6	-	1842 millions

Total 444

Total 5042 millions

Those who are acquainted with the power with which even a small ratio, acting in progression, multiplies in a long series, will see nothing to wonder at in this table. Those who are not acquainted with that subject, and not knowing what else to say, may be inclined to deny it. But it is not their opinion one way, nor mine the other, that can influence the event. The table exhibits the natural march of the funding system to its irredeemable dissolution. Supposing the present government of England to continue, and to go on as it has gone on since the funding system began, I would not give twenty shillings for one hundred pounds in the funds to be paid twenty years hence. I do not speak this predictively; I produce the data upon which that belief is founded; and which data it is every body's interest to know, who have any thing to do with the funds, or who are going to bequeath property to their descendants to be paid at a future day.

Perhaps it may be asked, that as governments or ministers proceeded by no ratio in making loans or incurring debts, and as nobody intended any ratio, or thought of any, how does it happen

* The actual expense of the war of 1739 did not come up to the sum ascertained by the ratio. But as that which is the natural disposition of a thing, as it is the natural disposition of a stream of water to descend, will, if impeded in its course overcome by a new effort what it had lost by that impediment, so it was with respect to this war and the next (1756,) taken collectively; for the expense of the war of 1756 restored the equilibrium of the ratio, as if it had not been impeded. A circumstance that serves to prove the truth of the ratio more fully than if the interruption had not taken place. The war of 1739 was languid; the efforts were below the value of money at that time; for the ratio is the measure of the depreciation of money in consequence of the funding system; or what comes to the same end, it is the measure of the increase of paper. Every additional quantity of it, whether in bank notes or otherwise, diminishes the *real*, though not the *nominal*, value of the former quantity.

that there is one ? I answer, that the ratio is founded in necessity ; and I now go to explain what that necessity is.

It will always happen, that the price of labor, or of the produce of labor, be that produce what it may, will be in proportion to the quantity of money in a country, admitting things to take their natural course. Before the invention of the funding system, there was no other money than gold, and silver ; and as nature gives out those metals with a sparing hand, and in regular annual quantities from the mines, the several prices of things were proportioned to the quantity of money at that time, and so nearly stationary as to vary but little in any fifty or sixty years of that period.

The funding system was a substitute for gold and silver. That substitute was paper ; and the quantity increased as the interest increased upon accumulated loans. This appearance of a new and additional species of money in the nation, soon began to break the relative value which money and the things it will purchase bore to each other before. Every thing rose in price ; but the rise at first was little and slow, like the difference in units between two first numbers, 8 and 12, compared with the two last numbers 90 and 135, in the table. It was however sufficient to make itself considerably felt in a large transaction. When, therefore, government, by engaging in a new war, required a new loan, it was obliged to make a higher loan than the former loan, to balance the increased price to which things had risen ; and as that new loan increased the quantity of paper in proportion to the new quantity of interest, it carried the price of things still higher than before. The next loan was again higher, to balance that further increased price ; and all this in the same manner though not in the same degree, that every new emission of continental money in America, or of assignats in France, were greater than the preceding emission, to make head against the advance of prices, till the combat could be maintained no longer. Herein is founded the necessity of which I have just spoken. That necessity proceeds with accelerating velocity, and the ratio I have laid down is the measure of that acceleration ; or, to speak the technical language of the subject, it is the measure of the increasing depreciation of funded paper money, which it is impossible to prevent, while the quantity of that money and of bank notes continues to multiply. What else but this can account for the difference between one war costing 21 millions, and another war costing 160 millions ?

The difference cannot be accounted for on the score of extraordinary efforts or extraordinary achievements. The war that cost twenty-one millions was the war of the confederates, historically called the grand alliance, consisting of England, Austria, and Holland, in the time of William III. against Louis XIV. and in which the confederates were victorious. The present is a war of a much greater confederacy ; a confederacy of England, Austria, Prussia, the German empire, Spain, Holland, Naples, and Sardinia, eight powers against the French republic singly, and the republic has beaten the whole confederacy. But to return to my subject.

It is said in England, that the value of paper keeps equal with the value of gold and silver. But the case is not rightly stated : for the fact is, that the paper has *pulled down* the value of gold and silver to a level with itself.—Gold and silver will not purchase so much of any purchasable article at this day as if no paper had appeared, nor so much as it will in any country in Europe where there is no paper. How long this hanging together of money and paper will continue, makes a new case ; because it daily exposes the system to sudden death, independent of the natural death it would otherwise suffer.

I consider the funding system as being now advanced into the last twenty years of its existence. The single circumstance, were there no other, that a war should now cost *nominally* one hundred and sixty millions, which when the system began cost but twenty-one millions, or that the loan for one year only (including the loan to the emperor) should now be *nominally* greater than the whole expense of that war, shows the state of depreciation to which the funding system has arrived. Its depreciation is in the proportion of eight for one, compared with the value of its money when the system began ; which is the state the French assignats stood a year ago (March 1795) compared with gold and silver. It is, therefore, that I say, that the English funding system, has entered on the last twenty years of its existence, comparing each twenty years of the English system with every single year of the American and French systems as before stated.

Again, supposing the present war to close as former wars have done, and without producing either revolution or reform in England, another war, at least, must be looked for in the space of the twenty years I allude to ; for it has never yet since happened that

twenty years have passed off without a war, and that more especially since the English government has dabbled in German politics, and shown a disposition to insult the world, and the world of commerce, with her navy. The next war will carry the national debt to very nearly seven hundred millions, the interest of which, at four per cent. will be twenty-eight millions besides the taxes for the (then) expenses of government, which will increase in the same proportion, and which will carry the taxes to at least forty millions; and if another war only begins, it will quickly carry them to above fifty; for it is in the last twenty years of the funding system, as in the last year of the American and French systems without funding, that all the great shocks begin to operate.

I have just mentioned that paper, in England has *pulled down* the value of gold and silver to a level with itself; and that this *pulling down* of gold and silver money has created the appearance of paper money keeping up. The same thing, and the same mistake, took place in America and in France, and continued for a considerable time after the commencement of their system of paper; and the actual depreciation of money was hidden under that mistake.

It was said in America, at that time, that every thing was becoming *dear*; but gold and silver could then buy those dear articles no cheaper than paper could; and therefore it was not called depreciation. The idea of *dearness* established itself for the idea of depreciation. The same was the case in France. Though every thing rose in price soon after assignats appeared, yet those dear articles could be purchased no cheaper with gold and silver, than with paper, and it was only said that things were *dear*. The same is still the language in England. They called it *dearness*. But they will soon find that it is an actual depreciation, and that this depreciation is the effect of the funding system; which, by crowding such a continually-increasing mass of paper into circulation, carries down the value of gold and silver with it. But gold and silver, will, in the long run, revolt against depreciation, and separate from the value of paper; for the progress of all such systems appears to be, that the paper will take the command in the beginning, and gold and silver in the end.

But this succession in the command of gold and silver over paper, makes a crisis far more eventful to the funding system than to any other system upon which paper can be issued; for, strictly

speaking, it is not a crisis of danger, but a symptom of death. It is a death stroke to the funding system. It is a revolution in the whole of its affairs.

If paper be issued without being funded upon interest, emissions of it can be continued after the value of it separates from gold and silver, as we have seen in the two cases of America and France. But the funding system rests altogether upon the value of paper being equal to gold and silver; which will be as long as the paper can continue carrying down the value of gold and silver to the same level to which itself descends, and no longer. But even in this state, that of descending equally together, the minister, whoever he may be, will find himself beset with accumulating difficulties; because the loans and taxes voted for the service of each ensuing year will wither in his hands before the year expires or before they can be applied.--This will force him to have recourse to emissions of what are called exchequer and navy bills, which, by still increasing the mass of paper in circulation, will drive on the depreciation still more rapidly.

It ought to be known that taxes in England are not paid in gold and silver, but in paper, (bank notes.) Every person who pays any considerable quantity of taxes, such as malsters, brewers, distillers, (I appeal for the truth of it, to any of the collectors of excise in England, or to Mr. Whitebread,) knows this to be the case. There is not gold and silver enough in the nation to pay the taxes in coin, as I shall show; and consequently there is not money enough in the bank to pay the notes. The interest of the national funded debt is paid at the bank in the same kind of paper in which the taxes are collected. When people find, as they will find, a reservedness among each other in giving gold and silver for bank notes, or the least preference for the former over the latter, they will go for payment to the bank, where they have a right to go. They will do this as a measure of prudence, each one for himself, and the truth or delusion of the funding system will then be proved.

I have said in the foregoing paragraph that there is not gold and silver enough in the nation to pay the taxes in coin, and consequently that there cannot be enough in the bank to pay the notes. As I do not choose to rest any thing upon assertion, I appeal for the truth of this to the publications of Mr. Eden (now called lord Auckland) and George Chalmers, secretary to the board of trade

and plantation, of which Jenkinson (now called lord Hawkesbury) is president. [These sort of folks change their names so often that it is as difficult to know them as a thief.] Chalmers gives the quantity of gold and silver coin from the returns of coinage at the mint; and, after deducting for the light gold recoined, says, that the amount of gold and silver coin is *about twenty millions*. He had better not have proved this, especially if he had reflected, that *public credit is suspicion asleep*. The quantity is much too little.

Of this twenty millions (which is not a fourth part of the quantity of gold and silver there is in France, as is shown in Mr. Neckar's Treatise on the administration of the Finances) three millions, at least, must be supposed to be in Ireland, some in Scotland, and in the West Indies, Newfoundland, &c. The quantity therefore in England cannot be more than sixteen millions, which is four millions less than the amount of the taxes. But admitting that there are sixteen millions, not more than a fourth part thereof can be in London, when it is considered that every city, town, village, and farm-house in the nation must have a part of it, and that all the great manufactories, which most require cash, are out of London. Of this four millions in London, every banker, merchant, tradesman, in short, every individual must have some. He must be a poor shopkeeper indeed, who has not a few guineas in his till. The quantity of cash therefore in the bank, never can, on the evidence of circumstances, be so much as two millions; most probably not more than one million; and on this slender twig, always liable to be broken, hangs the whole funding system of four hundred millions, besides many millions in bank notes. The sum in the bank is not sufficient to pay one-fourth of only one year's interest of the national debt, were the creditors to demand payment in cash, or demand cash for the bank notes in which the interest is paid. A circumstance always liable to happen.

One of the amusements that has kept up the farce of the funding system, is, that the interest is regularly paid. But as the interest is always paid in bank notes, and as bank notes can always be coined for the purpose, this mode of payment proves nothing. The point of proof is, can the bank give cash for the bank notes with which the interest is paid? If it cannot, and it is evident that it cannot, some millions of bank notes must go

without payment, and those holders of bank notes who apply last, will be worst off. Were the present quantity of cash in the bank paid away, it is next to impossible to see how any new quantity is to arrive. None will arrive from taxes, for the taxes will all be paid in bank notes; and should the government refuse bank notes in payment of taxes, the credit of bank notes will be gone at once, no cash will arise from the business of discounting merchant's bills; for every merchant will pay off those bills in bank notes, and not in cash. There is therefore no means left for the bank to obtain a new supply of cash, after the present quantity be paid away. But besides the impossibility of paying the interest of the funded debt in cash, there are many thousand persons in London and in the country, who are holders of bank notes that came into their hands in the fair way of trade, and who are not stock holders in the funds; and as such persons have had no hand in increasing the demand upon the bank, as those have had, who for their own private interest, like Boyd and others, are contracting, or pretending to contract, for new loans, they will conceive they have a just right that their bank notes should be paid first. Boyd has been very sly in France, in changing his paper into cash. He will be just as sly in doing the same thing in London; for he has learned to calculate: and then it is probable he will set off for America.

A stoppage of payment at the bank is not a new thing. Smith in his *Wealth of Nations*, book ii. chap. 2. says, "that in the year 1696, exchequer bills fell forty, fifty, and sixty per cent.—bank notes twenty per cent. and the bank stopped payment." That which happened in 1696, may happen again in 1796. The period in which it happened was the last year of the war of king William. It necessarily put a stop to the further emission of exchequer and navy bills, and to the raising of new loans; and the peace which took place the next year was probably hurried on by this circumstance, and saved the bank from bankruptcy. Smith in speaking from the circumstances of the bank, upon another occasion says, (book ii. chap. 2.) "This great company had been reduced to the necessity of paying in sixpences." When a bank adopts the expedient of paying in sixpences, it is a confession of insolvency.

It is worthy of observation, that every case of failure in finances, since the system of paper began, has produced a revo-

lution in government, either total or partial. A failure in the finance of the assignats broke up the revolutionary government, and produced the present French constitution. A failure in the finances of the old congress of America and the embarrassments it brought upon the commerce, broke up the system of the old confederation, and produced the federal constitution. If, then, we admit of reasoning by comparison of causes and events, the failure of the English finances will produce some change in the government of the country.

As to Mr. Pitt's project of paying off the national debt by applying a million a-year for that purpose, while he continues adding more than twenty millions a-year to it, it is like setting a man with a wooden leg to run after a hare. The longer he runs the farther he is off.

When I said that the funding system had entered the last twenty years of its existence, I certainly did not mean that it would continue twenty years, and then expire as a lease would. I meant to describe that age of decrepitude in which death is every day to be expected, and life cannot continue long. But the death of credit, or that state that is called bankruptcy, is not always marked by those progressive stages of visible decline, that mark the decline of natural life. In the progression of natural life, age cannot counterfeit youth, nor conceal the departure of juvenile abilities. But it is otherwise with respect to the death of credit ; for though all the approaches to bankruptcy may actually exist in circumstances, they admit of being concealed by appearances. Nothing is more common than to see the bankrupt of to-day a man of credit but the day before ; yet no sooner is the real state of his affairs known, than every body can see that he had been insolvent long before. In London, the greatest theatre of bankruptcy in Europe, this part of the subject will be well and feelingly understood.

Mr. Pitt continually talks of credit, and of the national resources. These are two of the feigned appearances by which the approaches to bankruptcy are concealed. That which he calls credit may exist, as I have just shown, in a state of insolvency, and is always what I have before described it to be, *suspicion asleep*.

As to national resources, Mr. Pitt, like all the English financiers that preceded him since the funding system began, has

uniformly mistaken the nature of a resource ; that is, they have mistaken it consistently with the delusion of the funding system ; but time is explaining the delusion. That which he calls, and which they called, a resource, is not a resource, but is the *anticipation* of a resource. They have anticipated what *would have been* a resource in another generation, had not the use of it been so anticipated. The funding system is a system of anticipation. Those who established it an hundred years ago, anticipated the resources of those who were to live an hundred years after : for the people of the present day have to pay the interest of the debts contracted at that time, and of all debts contracted since. But it is the last feather that breaks the horse's back. Had the system began an hundred years before, the amount of taxes at this time to pay the annual interest at four per cent. (could we suppose such a system of insanity to have thus continued) would be two hundred and twenty millions annually : for the capital of the debt would be 5486 millions, according to the ratio that ascertains the expense of the wars for the hundred years that are past. But long before it could have reached this period, the value of bank notes, from the immense quantity of them, (for it is in paper only that such a nominal revenue could be collected,) would have been as low or lower than continental paper money has been in America, or assignats in France ; and as for the idea of exchanging them for gold and silver, it is too absurd to be contradicted.

Do we not see that nature, in all her operations, disowns the visionary basis upon which the funding system is built ? She acts always by renewed successions, and never by accumulating additions, perpetually progressing. Animals, and vegetables, men and trees, have existed since the world began : but that existence has been carried on by succession of generations, and not by continuing the same men and the same trees in existence that existed first ; and to make room for the new she removes the old. Every natural idiot can see this. It is the stock-jobbing idiot only that mistakes. He has conceived that art can do what nature cannot. He is teaching her a new system ; that there is no occasion for man to die ; that the scheme of creation can be carried on upon the plan of the funding system ; that it can proceed by continual additions of new beings like new loans, and all live together in eternal youth. Go, count the graves, thou idiot, and learn the folly of thy arithmetic.

But besides these things, there is something visibly farcical in the whole operation of loaning. It is scarcely more than four years ago that such a rot of bankruptcy spread itself over London, that the whole commercial fabric tottered ; trade and credit were at a stand ; and such was the state of things, that to prevent or suspend a general bankruptcy, the government lent the merchants six millions in *government* paper, and now the merchants lend the government twenty-two millions in *their* paper ; and two parties, Boyd and Morgan, men but little known, contend who shall be the lenders. What a farce is this ! It reduces the operation of loaning to accommodation paper, in which the competitors contend, not who shall lend, but who shall sign, because there is something to be got for signing.

Every English stock-jobber and minister boasts of the credit of England. Its credit, say they, is greater than that of any country in Europe. There is a good reason for this : for there is not another country in Europe that could be made the dupe of such a delusion. The English funding system will remain a monument of wonder, not so much on account of the extent to which it has been carried, as of the folly of believing in it.

Those who had formerly predicted that the funding system would break up when the debt should amount to one hundred or one hundred and fifty millions, erred only in not distinguishing between insolvency and actual bankruptcy : for the insolvency commenced as soon as the government became unable to pay the interest in cash, or to give cash for the bank notes in which the interest was paid, whether that inability was known or not, or whether it was suspected or not. Insolvency always takes place before bankruptcy : for bankruptcy is nothing more than the publication of that insolvency. In the affairs of an individual, it often happens that insolvency exists several years before bankruptcy, and that the insolvency is concealed and carried on till the individual is not able to pay one shilling in the pound. A government can ward off bankruptcy longer than an individual : but insolvency will inevitably produce bankruptcy, whether in an individual or in a government. If then the quantity of bank notes payable on demand, which the bank has issued, are greater than the bank can pay off, the bank is insolvent : and when that insolvency is declared, it is bankruptcy.*

* Among the delusions that have been imposed upon the nation by minis-

I come now to show the several ways by which bank notes get into circulation. I shall afterwards offer an estimate on the total quantity or amount of bank notes existing at this moment.

The bank acts in three capacities. As a bank of discount ; as a bank of deposite ; and as a bank for the government.

1st, As a bank of discount. The bank discounts merchants' bills of exchange for two months. When a merchant has a bill that will become due at the end of two months, and wants payment before that time, the bank advances that payment to him, deducting therefrom at the rate of five per cent. per annum. The bill of exchange remains at the bank as a pledge or pawn, and at the end of two months it must be redeemed. This transaction is done altogether in paper ; for the profits of the bank, as a bank of discount, arise entirely from its making use of paper as money. The bank gives bank notes to the merchant in discounting the bill of exchange, and the redeemer of the bill pays bank-notes to the bank in redeeming it. It very seldom happens that any real money passes between them.

If the profits of a bank be, for example, two hundred thousand

ters, to give a false colouring to its affairs, and by none more than by Mr. Pitt, is a motley, amphibious-charactered thing called the *balance of trade*. This balance of trade, as it is called, is taken from the custom-house books, in which entries are made of all cargoes exported, and also of all cargoes imported, in each year—and when the value of the exports, according to the price set upon them by the exporter or by the custom-house, is greater than the value of the imports, estimated in the same manner, they say, the balance of trade is much in their favor.

The custom-house books prove regularly enough that so many cargoes have been exported, and so many imported—but this is all that they prove, or were intended to prove. They have nothing to do with the balance of profit or loss ; and it is ignorance to appeal to them upon that account : for the case is, that the greater the loss is in any one year, the higher will this thing called the balance of trade appear to be according to the custom-house books. For example, nearly the whole of the Mediterranean convoy has been taken by the French this year—consequently those cargoes will not appear as imports on the custom-house books, and therefore the balance of trade, by which they mean the profits of it will appear to be so much the greater, as the loss amounts to—and on the other hand, had the loss not happened, the profits would have appeared to have been so much the less. All the losses happening at sea, to returning cargoes, by accidents, by the elements, or by capture, make the balance appear the higher on the side of the exports—and were they all lost at sea, it would appear to be all profit on the custom-house books. Also every cargo of exports that is lost and occasions another to be sent, adds in like manner to the side of the exports, and appears as profit. This year the balance of trade will appear high, because the losses have been great by capture and by storms. The ignorance of the British parliament in listening to this hackneyed imposition of ministers about the balance of trade is astonishing. It shows how little they know of national affairs—and Mr. Grey may as well talk Greek to them, as to make motions about the state of the nation. They understand only fox-hunting and the game laws.

pounds a-year, (a great sum to be made merely by exchanging one sort of paper for another, and which shows also that the merchants of that place are pressed for money for payments, instead of having money to spare to lend to government,) it proves that the bank discounts to the amount of four millions annually, or 666,666*l.* every two months ; and as there never remain in the bank more than two month's pledges, of the value of 666,666*l.* at any one time, the amount of bank notes in circulation at any one time should not be more than to that amount. This is sufficient to show, that the present immense quantity of bank notes, which are distributed through every city, town, village, and farm-house in England, cannot be accounted for on the score of discounting.

2d, As a bank of deposit. To deposit money at the bank means to lodge it there for the sake of convenience, and to be drawn out at any moment the depositor pleases, or to be paid away to his order. When the business of discounting is great, that of depositing is necessarily small. No man deposits and applies for discounts at the same time ; for it would be like paying interest for lending money, instead of for borrowing it. The deposits that are now made at the bank are almost entirely in bank notes, and consequently they add nothing to the ability of the bank to pay off the bank notes that may be presented for payment ; and besides this, the deposits are no more the property of the bank than the cash or bank notes in a merchant's counting house are the property of his book-keeper. No great increase therefore of bank notes, beyond what the discounting business admits can be accounted for on the score of deposits.

3d, The bank acts as banker for the government. This is the connexion that threatens to ruin every public bank. It is through this connexion that the credit of a bank is forced far beyond what it ought to be, and still further beyond its ability to pay. It is through this connexion, that such an immense, redundant quantity of bank notes have gotten into circulation ; and which, instead of being issued because there was property in the bank, have been issued because there was none.

When the treasury is empty, which happens in almost every year of every war, its coffers at the bank are empty also. It is in this condition of emptiness that the minister has recourse to emissions of what are called exchequer and navy bills, which con-

tinually generates a new increase of bank notes, and which are sported upon the public, without there being property in the bank to pay them.—These exchequer and navy bills (being, as I have said, emitted because the treasury and its coffers at the bank are empty, and cannot pay the demands that come in) are no other than an acknowledgment that the bearer is entitled to receive so much money. They may be compared to the settlement of an account, in which the debtor acknowledges the balance he owes, and for which he gives a note of hand; or to a note of hand given to raise money upon it.

Sometimes the bank discounts those bills as it would discount merchants bills of exchange; sometimes it purchases them of the holders at the current price; and sometimes it agrees with the ministers to pay an interest upon them to the holders, and keep them in circulation. In every one of these cases an additional quantity of bank notes gets into circulation, and are sported, as I have said, upon the public, without there being property in the bank, as banker for the government, to pay them; and besides this, the bank has now no money of its own; for the money that was originally subscribed to begin the credit of the bank with, at its first establishment, has been lent to government and wasted long ago.

“The bank (says Smith, book ii. chap. 2.) acts not only as an ordinary bank, but as a great engine of state; it receives and pays the greater part of the annuities which are due to the creditors of the *public*.” (It is worth observing, that the *public*, or the *nation*, is always put for the government, in speaking of debts.) “It circulates” (says Smith) “exchequer bills, and it advances to government the annual amount of the land and malt taxes, which are frequently not paid till several years afterwards.” (This advancement is also done in bank notes, for which there is not property in the bank.) “In those different operations (says Smith) *its duty to the public* may sometimes have obliged it, without any fault of its directors, to *overstock the circulation with paper money*.”—bank notes. How *its duty to the public* can induce it to *overstock that public* with promissory bank notes which it *cannot pay*, and thereby expose the individuals of that public to ruin, is too paradoxical to be explained; for it is on the credit which individuals *give to the bank*, by receiving and circulating its notes, and not upon its *own* credit or its *own* property, for it has none,

that the bank sports. If, however, it be the duty of the bank to expose the public to this hazard, it is at least equally the duty of the individuals of that public to get their money and take care of themselves ; and leave it to placemen, pensioners, government contractors, Reeves' association, and the members of both houses of parliament, who have voted away the money at the nod of the minister, to continue the credit if they can, and for which their estates, individually and collectively, ought to answer as far as they will go.

There has always existed, and still exists, a mysterious, suspicious connexion, between the minister and the directors of the bank, and which explains itself no otherwise than by a continual increase of bank notes. Without, therefore, entering into any further details of the various contrivances by which bank notes are issued, and thrown upon the public, I proceed, as I before mentioned, to offer an estimate on the total quantity of bank notes in circulation.

However disposed governments may be to extort money by taxes from the people, there is a limit to the practice established in the nature of things. That limit is the proportion between the quantity of money in a nation, be that quantity of money what it may, and the greatest quantity of taxes that can be raised upon it. People have other uses for money besides paying taxes ; and it is only a proportional part of that money they can spare for taxes, as it is only a proportional part they can spare for house-rent, for clothing, or for any other particular use. These proportions find out and establish themselves ; and that with such exactness, that if any one part exceeds its proportion, all the other parts feel it.

Before the invention of paper money, (bank notes,) there was no other money in the nation than gold and silver, and the greatest quantity of money that ever was raised in taxes during that period, never exceeded a fourth part of the quantity of money in the nation. It was high taxing when it came to this point. The taxes in the time of William III. never reached to four millions, before the invention of paper, and the quantity of money in the nation at that time was estimated to be about sixteen millions. The same proportions established themselves in France. There was no paper money in France before the present revolution, and the taxes were collected in gold and silver money. The highest quantity of taxes never exceeded twenty-two millions sterling ;

and the quantity of gold and silver money in the nation at the same time, as stated by M. Neckar, from returns of coinage at the mint, in his treatise on the Administration of the Finances, was about ninety millions sterling. To go beyond this limit of a fourth part, in England, they were obliged to introduce paper money; and the attempt to go beyond it in France, where paper could not be introduced, broke up the government.

This proportion, therefore, of a fourth part, is the limit which the nature of the thing establishes for itself, be the quantity of money in a nation more or less.

The amount of taxes, in England, at this time is full twenty millions; and therefore the quantity of gold and silver, and of bank notes, taken together, amounts to eighty millions. The quantity of gold and silver, as stated by lord Hawkesbury's secretary, (George Chalmers,) as I have before shown, is twenty millions; and, therefore, the total amount of bank notes in circulation, all made payable on demand, is sixty millions. This enormous sum will astonish the most stupid stock-jobber, and overpower the credulity of the most thoughtless Englishman: but were it only a third part of that sum, the bank cannot pay half a crown in the pound.

There is something curious in the movements of this modern complicated machine, the funding system; and it is only now that it is beginning to unfold the full extent of its movements. In the first part of its movements it gives great powers into the hands of government, and in the last part it takes them completely away.

The funding system set out with raising revenues under the name of loans, by means of which government became both prodigal and powerful. The loaners assumed the name of creditors, and though it was soon discovered that loaning was government-jobbing, those pretended loaners, or the persons who purchased into the funds afterwards, conceived themselves not only to be creditors, but to be the *only* creditors.

But such has been the operation of this complicated machine, the funding system, that it has produced, unperceived, a second generation of creditors, more numerous and far more formidable, and withal more real than the first generation; for every holder of a bank note is a creditor, and a real creditor, and the debt due to him is made payable on demand. The debt, therefore, which the government owes to individuals is composed of two parts;

the one about four hundred millions bearing interest, the other about sixty millions payable on demand. The one is called the funded debt, the other is the debt due in bank notes.

The second debt (that contained in the bank notes) has, in a great measure, been incurred to pay the interest of the first debt; so that in fact little or no real interest has been paid by government. The whole has been delusion and fraud. Government first contracted a debt, in the form of loans, with one class of people, and then ran clandestinely in debt with another class, by means of bank notes, to pay the interest. Government acted of itself in contracting the first debt, and made a machine of the bank to contract the second. It is this second debt that changes the seat of power and the order of things; for it puts it in the power of even a small part of the holders of bank notes, (had they no other motives than disgust at Pitt and Grenville's sedition bills,) to control any measure of government they found to be injurious to their interest; and that not by popular meetings, or popular societies, but by the simple and easy operation of withholding their credit from that government; that is, by individually demanding payment, at the bank, for every bank note that comes into their hands. Why should Pitt and Grenville expect that the very men whom they insult and injure, should, at the same time, continue to support the measures of Pitt and Grenville, by giving credit to their promissory notes of payment? No new emissions of bank notes could go on while payment was demanding on the old, and the cash in the bank wasting daily away; nor any new advances be made to government, or to the emperor, to carry on the war; nor any new emission to be made on exchequer bills.

"*The bank*," says Smith, (book ii. chap. 2) is "*a great engine of state*." And in the same paragraph he says, "*The stability of the bank is equal to that of the British government*;" which is the same as to say that the stability of the government is equal to that of the bank, and no more. If then the bank cannot pay, the *arch-treasurer of the holy Roman empire* (S. R. I. A.*) is a bankrupt. When folly invented titles, she did not attend to their application; for ever since the government of England has been in the hands of *arch-treasurers*, it has been running into bankruptcy; and as to the *arch-treasurer apparent*, he has been a bankrupt

* Part of the inscription on an English guinea.

long ago. What a miserable prospect has England before its eyes !

Before the war of 1755, there were no bank notes lower than twenty pounds. During that war, bank notes of fifteen pounds and of ten pounds were coined ; and now, since the commencement of the present war, they are coined as low as five pounds. These five pound notes will circulate chiefly among little shopkeepers, butchers, bakers, market people, renters of small houses, lodgers, &c. All the high departments of commerce, and the affluent stations of life were already *overstocked*, as Smith expresses it, with the bank notes. No place remained open wherein to crowd an additional quantity of bank notes but among the class of people I have just mentioned, and the means of doing this could be best effected by coining five pound notes. This conduct has the appearance of that of an unprincipled insolvent, who, when on the verge of bankruptcy to the amount of many thousands, will borrow as low as five pounds of the servants in his house, and break the next day.

But whatever momentary relief or aid the minister and his bank might expect from this low contrivance of five pound notes, it will increase the inability of the bank to pay the higher notes, and hasten the destruction of all ; for even the small taxes that used to be paid in money will now be paid in those notes, and the bank will soon find itself with scarcely any other money than what the hair-powder guinea tax brings in.

The bank notes make the most serious part of the business of finance : what is called the national funded debt is but a trifle when put in comparison with it ; yet the case of the bank notes has never been touched upon. But it certainly ought to be known upon what authority, whether that of the minister or of the directors, and upon what foundation, such immense quantities are issued. I have stated the amount of them at sixty millions ; I have produced data for that estimation ; and besides this, the apparent quantity of them, far beyond that of gold and silver in the nation, corroborates the statement. Were there but a third part of sixty millions, the bank cannot pay half a crown in the pound ; for no new supply of money, as before said, can arrive at the bank, as all the taxes will be paid in paper.

When the funding system began, it was not doubled that the loans that had been borrowed would be repaid. Government not

only propagated that belief, but it began paying them off. In time this profession came to be abandoned : and it is not difficult to see that bank notes will march the same way ; for the amount of them is only another debt under another name ; and the probability is that Mr. Pitt will at last propose funding them. In that case bank notes will not be so valuable as French assignats. The assignats have a solid property in reserve, in the national domains ; bank notes have none ; and, besides this, the English revenue must then sink down to what the amount of it was before the funding system began—between three and four millions ; one of which the *arch-treasurer* would require for himself, and the *arch-treasurer apparent* would require three-quarters of a million more to pay his debts. “ *In France,*” says Sterne, “ *they order these things better.*”

I have now exposed the English system of finance to the eyes of all nations ; for this work will be published in all languages. In doing this, I have done an act of justice to those numerous citizens of neutral nations who have been imposed upon by that fraudulent system, and who have property at stake upon the event.

As an individual citizen of America, and as far as an individual can go, I have revenged (if I may use the expression without any immoral meaning) the piratical depredations committed on the American commerce by the English government. I have retaliated for France on the subject of finance : and I conclude with retorting on Mr. Pitt the expression he used against France, and say, that the English system of finance “ *IS ON THE VERGE, MAY EVEN IN THE GULF OF BANKRUPTCY.*”

THOMAS PAINE

Paris, April 8, 1796.

TO

THE PEOPLE OF FRANCE.

PARIS, SEPT. 25, 1793.

FELLOW CITIZENS,

I RECEIVE with affectionate gratitude, the honor which the late national assembly has conferred upon me, by adopting me a citizen of France ; and the additional honor of being elected by my fellow citizens a member of the national convention. Happily impressed, as I am, by those testimonies of respect shown towards me as an individual, I feel my felicity increased by seeing the barrier broken down that divided patriotism by spots of earth, and limited citizenship to the soil, like vegetation.

Had those honors been conferred in an hour of national tranquillity, they would have afforded no other means of showing my affection, than to have accepted and enjoyed them ; but they come accompanied with circumstances that give me the honorable opportunity of commencing my citizenship in the stormy hour of difficulties. I come not to enjoy repose. Convinced that the cause of France is the cause of all mankind, and that liberty cannot be purchased by a wish, I gladly share with you the dangers and honors necessary to success.

I am well aware that the moment of any great change, such as that accomplished on the 10th of August, is unavoidably the moment of terror and confusion. The mind, highly agitated by hope, suspicion, and apprehension, continues without rest till the

change be accomplished. But let us now look calmly and confidently forward, and success is certain. It is no longer the paltry cause of kings, or of this or that individual, that calls France and her armies into action. It is the great cause of ALL. It is the establishment of a new era, that shall blot despotism from the earth, and fix, on the lasting principles of peace and citizenship, the great republic of man.

It has been my fate to have borne a share in the commencement and complete establishment of one revolution, (I mean the revolution of America.) The success and events of that revolution are encouraging to us. The prosperity and happiness that have since flowed to that country, have amply rewarded her for all the hardships she endured, and for all the dangers she encountered.

The principles on which that revolution began, have extended themselves to Europe ; and an over-ruling Providence is regenerating the old world by the principles of the new. The distance of America from all the other parts of the globe, did not admit of her carrying those principles beyond her own boundaries. It is to the peculiar honor of France, that she now raises the standard of liberty for all nations ; and in fighting her own battles, contends for the rights of all mankind.

The same spirit of fortitude that insured success to America ; will insure it to France ; for it is impossible to conquer a nation determined to be free ! The military circumstances that now unite themselves to France, are such as the despots of the earth know nothing of, and can form no calculation upon. They know not what it is to fight against a nation. They have only been accustomed to make war upon each other, and they know from system and practice, how to calculate the probable success of despot against despot ; and here their knowledge and their experience end.

But in a contest like the present a new and boundless variety of circumstances arise, that derange all such customary calculations. When a whole nation acts as an army, the despot knows not the extent of the power against which he contends. New armies arise against him with the necessity of the moment. It is then that the difficulties of an invading enemy multiply, as in the former case they diminished ; and he finds them at their height when he expected them to end.

The only war that has any similarity of circumstances with the present, is the late revolutionary war in America. On her part, as it now is in France, it was a war of the whole nation. There it was that the enemy, by beginning to conquer, put himself in a condition of being conquered. His first victories prepared him for defeat. He advanced till he could not retreat, and found himself among a nation of armies.

Were it now to be proposed to the Austrians and Prussians, to escort them into the middle of France, and there leave them to make the most of such a situation, they would see too much into the dangers of it to accept the offer, and the same dangers would attend them could they arrive there by any other means. Where then is the military policy of their attempting to obtain by force, that which they would refuse by choice. But to reason with despots is throwing reason away. The best of arguments is a vigorous preparation.

Man is ever a stranger to the ways by which Providence regulates the order of things. The interference of foreign despots may serve to introduce into their own enslaved countries the principles that they come to oppose. Liberty and equality are blessings too great to be the inheritance of France alone. It is an honor to her to be their first champion ; and she may now say to her enemies, with a mighty voice, " O ! Ye Austrians, ye Prussians ! Ye who now turn your bayonets against us, it is for all Europe ; it is for all mankind, and not for France alone, that she raises the standard of liberty and equality !"

The public cause has hitherto suffered from the contradictions contained in the constitution of the constituent assembly. Those contradictions have served to divide the opinions of individuals at home, and to obscure the great principles of the revolution in other countries. But when those contradictions shall be removed, and the constitution made conformable to the declaration of rights ; when the bagatelles of monarchy, royalty, regency ; and hereditary succession shall be exposed, with all their absurdities, a new ray of light will be thrown over the world, and the revolution will derive new strength by being universally understood.

The scene that now opens itself to France extends far beyond the boundaries of her own dominions. Every nation is becoming her colleague, and every court is become her enemy. It is now the cause of all nations against the cause of all courts. The

terror that despotism felt, clandestinely begot a confederation of despots ; and their attack upon France was produced by their fears at home.

In entering on this great scene, greater than any nation has been called to act in, let us say to the agitated mind, be calm. Let us punish by instructing, rather than by revenge. Let us begin the new era by a greatness of friendship, and hail the approach of union and success.

Your fellow citizen,

THOMAS PAINE.

REASONS

FOR PRESERVING THE LIFE OF LOUIS CAPET, AS DELIVERED
TO THE NATIONAL CONVENTION.



CITIZEN PRESIDENT,

MY hatred and abhorrence of monarchy are sufficiently known; they originate in principles of reason and conviction, nor, except with life, can they ever be extirpated; but my compassion for the unfortunate, whether friend or enemy, is equally lively and sincere.

I voted that Louis should be tried, because it was necessary to afford proofs to the world of the perfidy, corruption, and abomination of the monarchical system. The infinity of evidence that has been produced, exposes them in the most glaring and hideous colors; thence it results, that monarchy, whatever form it may assume, arbitrary or otherwise, becomes necessarily a centre, round which are united every species of corruption, and the kingly trade is no less destructive of all morality in the human breast, than the trade of an executioner is destructive of its sensibility.

I remember, during my residence in another country, that I was exceedingly struck with a sentence of M. Autheine, at the Jacobins, which corresponds exactly with my own idea,—“Make me a king to-day,” said he, “and I shall be a robber to-morrow.”

Nevertheless, I am inclined to believe that if Louis Capet had been born in an amiable and respectable neighborhood, at liberty to practice the duties of domestic life, had he been thus situated, I cannot believe that he would have shown himself destitute of social virtues: we are, in a moment of fermentation like this, naturally little indulgent to his vices, or rather to those of monarchical governments; we regard them with additional horror and indignation; not that they are more heinous than those of his predecessors, but because our eyes are now open, and the veil of delusion

is at length withdrawn; yet the lamentable, degraded state to which he is actually reduced, is surely far less imputable to him, than to the constituent assembly, which, of its own authority, without consent or advice of the people, restored him to the throne.

I was in Paris at the time of the flight, or abdication, of Louis XVI., and when he was taken and brought back. The proposal of restoring him to supreme power struck me with amazement; and although at that time I was not a French citizen, yet as a citizen of the world, I employed all the efforts that depended on me to prevent it.

A small society, composed only of five persons, two of whom are now members of the convention, took at that time the name of the Republican club, (*societe republicaine*.) This society opposed the restoration of Louis, not so much on account of his personal offences, as in order to overthrow the monarchy, and to erect on its ruins the republican system and an equal representation.

With this design, I traced out in the English language certain propositions, which were translated with some trifling alterations, and signed by Achilles Duchatlet, actually lieutenant-general in the army of the French republic, and at that time one of the five members which composed our little party: the law requiring the signature of a citizen at the bottom of each printed paper.

The paper was indignantly torn by Malouet; and brought forth in this very room as an article of accusation against the person who had signed it, the author and their adherents, but such is the revolution of events, that this paper is now received and brought forth for a very opposite purpose: to remind the nation of the errors of that unfortunate day, that fatal error of not having then banished Louis XVI. from its bosom, and not to plead this day in favor of his exile, preferable to his death.

The paper in question, was conceived in the following terms:

“Brethren and fellow citizens,

“The serene tranquillity, the mutual confidence which prevailed amongst us, during the time of the late king’s escape, the indifference with which we beheld him return, are unequivocal proofs that the absence of a king is more desirable than his presence, and that he is not only a political superfluity, but a grievous burden, pressing hard on the whole nation.

“ Let us not be imposed upon by sophisms ; all that concerns this, is reduced to four points.

“ He has abdicated the throne in having fled from his post. Abdication and desertion are not characterized by the length of absence ; but by the single act of flight. In the present instance, the act is every thing, and the time nothing.

“ The nation can never give back its confidence to a man who, false to his trust, perjured to his oath, conspires a clandestine flight, obtains a fraudulent passport, conceals a king of France under the disguise of a valet, directs his course towards a frontier covered with traitors and deserters, and evidently meditates a return into our country, with a force capable of imposing his own despotic laws.

“ Whether ought his flight to be considered as his own act, or the act of those who fled with him ? Was it a spontaneous resolution of his own, or was it inspired into him by others ? The alternative is immaterial : whether fool or hypocrite, idiot or traitor, he has proved himself equally unworthy of the important functions that had been delegated to him.

“ In every sense that the question can be considered, the reciprocal obligation which subsisted between us is dissolved. He holds no longer any authority. We owe him no longer obedience. We see in him no more than an indifferent person ; we can regard him only as Louis Capet.

“ The history of France presents little else than a long series of public calamity, which takes its source from the vices of the kings : we have been the wretched victims that have never ceased to suffer either for them or by them. The catalogue of their oppressions was complete, but to complete the sum of their crimes, treason yet was wanting. Now the only vacancy is filled up, the dreadful list is full ; the system is exhausted : there are no remaining errors for them to commit, their reign is consequently at an end.

“ What kind of office must that be in a government which requires neither experience nor ability to execute ? That may be abandoned to the desperate chance of birth, that may be filled with an idiot, a madman, a tyrant, with equal effect as by the good, the virtuous, and the wise ? An office of this nature is a mere nonentity : it is a place of show, not of use. Let France then, arrived at the age of reason, no longer be deluded by the sound of

words, and let her deliberately examine, if a king, however insignificant and contemptible in himself, may not at the same time be extremely dangerous.

“The thirty millions which it costs to support a king in the eclat of stupid brutal luxury, presents us with an easy method of reducing taxes, which reduction would at once release the people, and stop the progress of political corruption. The grandeur of nations consists, not, as kings pretend, in the splendor of thrones, but in a conspicuous sense of their own dignity, and in a just disdain of those barbarous follies and crimes, which, under the sanction of royalty, have hitherto desolated Europe.

“As to the personal safety of Louis Capet, it is so much the more confirmed, as France will not stoop to degrade herself by a spirit of revenge against a wretch, who has dishonored himself. In defending a just and glorious cause, it is not possible to degrade it, and the universal tranquillity which prevails, is an undeniable proof, that a free people know how to respect themselves.”

Having thus explained the principles and the exertions of the republicans at that fatal period, when Louis was reinstated in full possession of the executive power, which by his flight had been suspended, I return to the subject, and to the deplorable situation in which the man is now actually involved.

What was neglected at the time of which I have been speaking, has been since brought about by the force of necessity; the wilful, treacherous defects in the former constitution have been brought to light; the continual alarm of treason and conspiracy roused the nation, and produced eventually a second revolution. The people have beat down royalty, never, never to rise again; they have brought Louis Capet to the bar, and demonstrated in the face of the whole world, the intrigues, the cabals, the falsehood, corruption and rooted depravity, the inevitable effects of monarchical governments. There remains then only one question to be considered, what is to be done with this man?

For myself, I seriously confess, that when I reflect on the unaccountable folly that restored the executive power to his hands, all covered as he was with perjury and treason, I am far more ready to condemn the constituent assembly than the unfortunate prisoner Louis Capet.

But abstracted from every other consideration, there is one cir-

cumstance in his life which ought to cover, or at least to palliate a great number of his transgressions, and this very circumstance affords to the French nation a blessed occasion of extricating itself from the yoke of kings, without defiling itself in the impurities of their blood.

It is to France alone, I know, that the United States of America owe that support which enabled them to shake off the unjust and tyrannical yoke of Britain. The ardor and zeal which she displayed to provide both men and money, were the natural consequence of a thirst for liberty. But as the nation at that time, restrained by the shackles of her own government, could only act by the means of a monarchical organ, this organ—whatever in other respects the object might be, certainly performed a good, a great action. Let then these United States be the safeguard and asylum of Louis Capet. There, hereafter, far removed from the miseries and crimes of royalty, he may learn, from the constant aspect of public prosperity, that the true system of government consists not in kings, but in fair, equal, and honorable representation.

In relating this circumstance, and in submitting this proposition, I consider myself as a citizen of both countries. I submit it as a citizen of America, who feels the debt of gratitude which he owes to every Frenchman. I submit it also as a man, who, although the enemy of kings, cannot forget that they are subject to human frailties.

I support my proposition as a citizen of the French republic, because it appears to me the best, and most politic measure that can be adopted.

As far as my experience in public life extends, I have ever observed, that the great mass of the people are invariably just, both in their intentions and their object ; but the true method of accomplishing that effect, does not always show itself in the first instance.

For example ; the English nation had groaned under the despotism of the Stuarts. Hence Charles I. lost his life ; yet Charles II. was restored to all the plenitude of power, which his father had lost.

Forty years afterwards the same family strove to re-establish their ancient oppressions ; so the nation then banished from its territories the whole race. The remedy was effectual. The

Stuart family sunk into obscurity, crowded itself with the multitude, and is at length extinct.

Two brothers of Louis Capet have banished themselves from the country ; but they are obliged to bear with the spirit and etiquette of the courts where they reside. They can advance no pretensions on their own account, so long as Louis Capet shall live.

Monarchy, in France, was a system pregnant with crimes and murders ; cancelling all natural ties, even those by which brothers are united. We know how often they have assassinated each other to pave a way to power. As those hopes which the emigrants had reposed in Louis XVI. are fled, the last which remains rests upon his death, and their situation inclines them to desire this catastrophe, that they may once again rally round an active chief, and try one further effort under the fortune of the *ci-devant* monsieur and d'Artois.

That such an enterprize would precipitate them into a new abyss of calamity and disgrace, it is not difficult to foresee ; but yet it might be attended with mutual loss, and it is our duty as legislators, not to spill a drop of blood, when our purpose may be effectually accomplished without it.

It has already been proposed to abolish the punishment of death. This cause must find its advocates in every corner, where enlightened politicians and lovers of humanity exist ; and it ought above all to find them in this assembly.

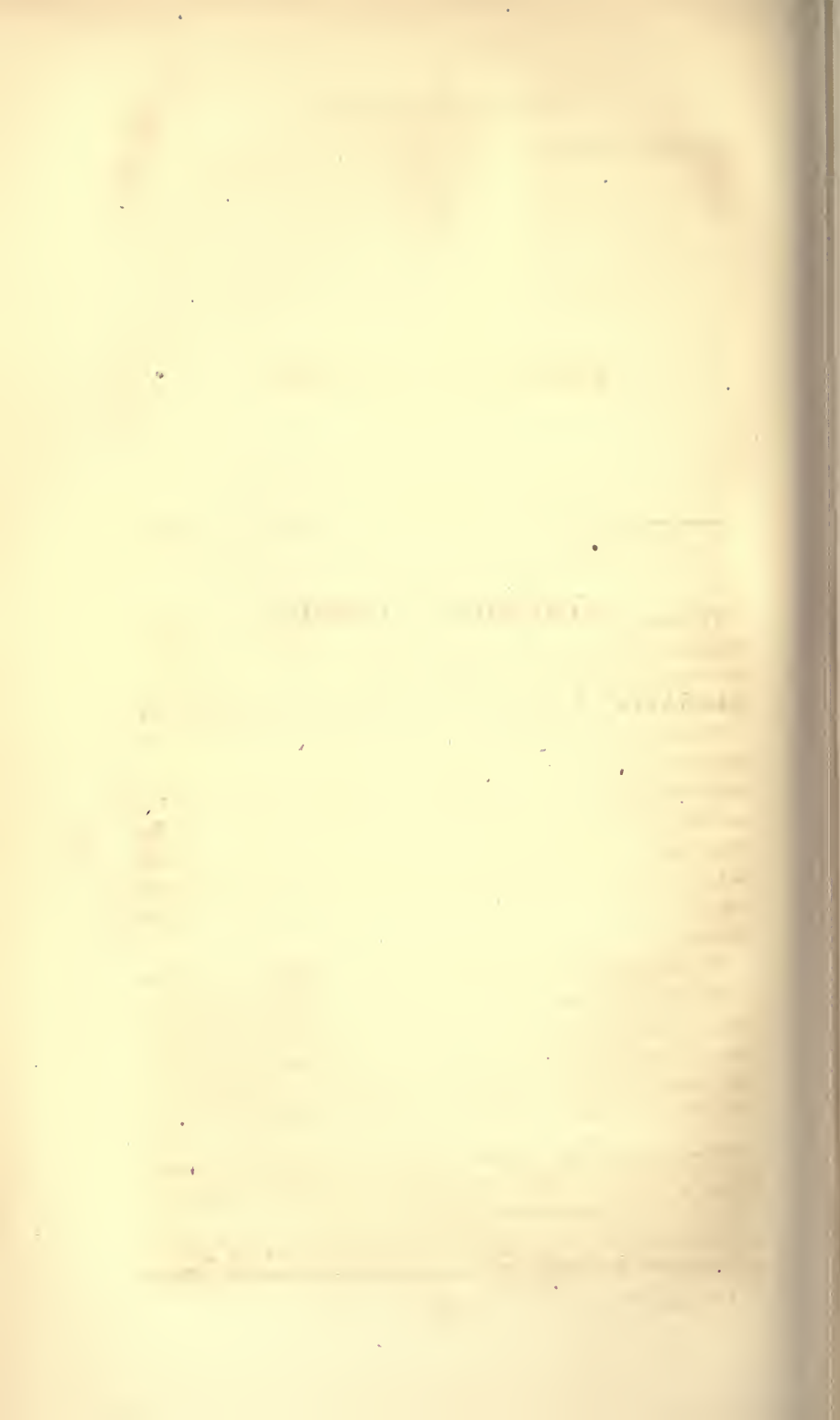
Monarchical governments have trained the human race, and inured it to the sanguinary arts and refinements of punishment ; and it is exactly the same punishment which has so long shocked the sight and tormented the patience of the people, that now, in their turn, they practice in revenge upon their oppressors. But it becomes us to be strictly on our guard against the abomination and perversity of monarchical examples : as France has been the first of European nations to abolish royalty, let her also be the first to abolish the punishment of death, and to find out a milder and more effectual substitute.

In the particular case now under consideration, I submit the following propositions : 1st, that the national convention shall pronounce sentence of banishment on Louis and his family. 2d, That Louis Capet shall be detained in prison till the end of the war ; and at that epoch the sentence of banishment to be executed.

AGRARIAN JUSTICE,

OPPOSED TO

AGRARIAN LAW, AND TO AGRARIAN MONOPOLY.



AGRARIAN JUSTICE.*



To preserve the benefits of what is called civilized life, and to remedy, at the same time, the evil which it has produced, ought to be considered as one of the first objects of reformed legislation.

Whether that state that is proudly, perhaps erroneously called civilization, has most promoted or most injured the general happiness of man, is a question that may be strongly contested. On one side, the spectator is dazzled by splendid appearances ; on the other, he is shocked by extremes of wretchedness ; both of which he has erected. The most affluent and the most miserable of the human race are to be found in the countries that are called civilized.

To understand what the state of society ought to be, it is necessary to have some idea of the natural and primitive state of man ; such as it is at this day among the Indians of North America. There is not, in that state, any of those spectacles of human misery which poverty and want present to our eyes, in all the towns and streets of Europe. Poverty, therefore, is a thing

* The occasion of the publication of the following piece, was a Sermon preached by Watson, bishop of Landaff, entitled "The wisdom and goodness of God, in having made both *rich* and *poor* ; with an appendix, containing reflections on the present state of England and France."

The error contained in the title of this Sermon, determined me to publish my *Agrarian Justice*. It is wrong to say that God made *rich* and *poor* ; he made only *male* and *female*, and he gave them the earth for their inheritance.

created by that which is called civilized life. It exists not in the natural state. On the other hand, the natural state is without those advantages which flow from agriculture, arts, science, and manufactures.

The life of an Indian is a continual holiday, compared with the poor of Europe ; and, on the other hand, it appears to be abject when compared to the rich. Civilization, therefore, or that which is so called, has operated two ways ; to make one part of society more affluent, and the other more wretched, than would have been the lot of either in a natural state.

It is always possible to go from the natural to the civilized state, but it is never possible to go from the civilized to the natural state. The reason is, that man, in a natural state, subsisting by hunting, requires ten times the quantity of land to range over, to procure himself sustenance, than would support him in a civilized state, where the earth is cultivated. When, therefore, a country becomes populous by the additional aids of cultivation, arts and science, there is a necessity of preserving things in that state ; because without it, there cannot be sustenance for more, perhaps, than a tenth part of its inhabitants. The thing, therefore, now to be done, is, to remedy the evils, and preserve the benefits that have arisen to society, by passing from the natural to that which is called the civilized state.

In taking the matter upon this ground, the first principle of civilization ought to have been, and ought still to be, that the condition of every person born into the world, after a state of civilization commences, ought not to be worse than if he had been born before that period. But the fact is, that the condition of millions, in every country in Europe, is far worse than if they had been born before civilization began, or had been born among the Indians of North-America at the present day. I will show how this fact has happened.

It is a position not to be controverted, that the earth, in its natural, uncultivated state, was, and ever would have continued to be, *the common property of the human race*. In that state every man would have been born to property. He would have been a joint life proprietor with the rest in the property of the soil, and in all its natural productions vegetable and animal.

But the earth in its natural state, as before said, is capable of supporting but a small number of inhabitants compared with what

it is capable of doing in a cultivated state. And as it is impossible to separate the improvement made by cultivation, from the earth itself, upon which that improvement is made, the idea of landed property arose from that inseparable connexion ; but it is nevertheless true, that it is the value of the improvement only, and not the earth itself, that is individual property. Every proprietor, therefore, of cultivated land, owes to the community, a *ground-rent* ; for I know of no better term to express the idea by, for the land which he holds : and it is from this ground-rent that the fund proposed in this plan is to issue.

It is deducible, as well from the nature of the thing, as from all the histories transmitted to us, that the idea of landed property commenced with cultivation, and that there was no such thing as landed property before that time. It could not exist in the first state of man, that of hunters. It did not exist in the second state, that of shepherds: neither Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, nor Job, so far as the history of the Bible may be credited in probable things, were owners of land. Their property consisted, as is always enumerated, in flocks and herds, and they travelled with them from place to place. The frequent contentions at that time, about the use of a well in the dry country of Arabia, where those people lived, show also that there was no landed property. It was not admitted that land could be claimed as property.

There could be no such thing as landed property originally. Man did not make the earth, and, though he had a natural right to *occupy* it, he had no right to *locate as his property* in perpetuity any part of it : neither did the creator of the earth open a land office, from whence the first title-deeds should issue. Whence then, arose the idea of landed property ? I answer as before, that when cultivation began, the idea of landed property began with it, from the impossibility of separating the improvement made by cultivation from the earth itself, upon which that improvement was made. The value of the improvement so far exceeded the value of the natural earth, at that time, as to absorb it ; till, in the end, the common right of all became confounded into the cultivated right of the individual. But there are, nevertheless, distinct species of rights, and will continue to be so long as the earth endures.

It is only by tracing things to their origin that we can gain rightful ideas of them, and it is by gaining such ideas that we dis-

cover the boundary that divides right from wrong, and which teaches every man to know his own. I have entitled this tract *Agrarian Justice*, to distinguish it from *Agrarian Law*. Nothing could be more unjust than *Agrarian Law* in a country improved by cultivation; for though every man, as an inhabitant of the earth, is a joint proprietor of it in its natural state, it does not follow that he is a joint proprietor of cultivated earth. The additional value made by cultivation, after the system was admitted, became the property of those who did it, or who inherited it from them, or who purchased it. It had originally no owner. Whilst, therefore, I advocate the right, and interest myself in the hard case of all those who have been thrown out of their natural inheritance by the introduction of the system of landed property, I equally defend the right of the possessor to the part which is his.

Cultivation is, at least, one of the greatest natural improvements ever made by human invention. It has given to created earth a ten fold value. But the landed monopoly that began with it, has produced the greatest evil. It has dispossessed more than half the inhabitants of every nation of their natural inheritance, without providing for them, as ought to have been done, an indemnification for that loss, and has thereby created a species of poverty and wretchedness that did not exist before.

In advocating the case of the persons thus dispossessed, it is a right, and not a charity, that I am pleading for. But it is that kind of right, which being neglected at first, could not be brought forward afterwards, till heaven had opened the way by a revolution in the system of government. Let us then do honor to revolutions by justice, and give currency to their principles by blessings.

Having thus in a few words, opened the merits of the case, I shall now proceed to the plan I have to propose, which is,

To create a national fund, out of which there shall be paid to every person, when arrived at the age of twenty-one years, the sum of fifteen pounds sterling, as a compensation in part, for the loss of his or her natural inheritance, by the introduction of the system of landed property.

And also, the sum of ten pounds per annum, during life, to every person now living, of the age of fifty years, and to all others as they shall arrive at that age.

MEANS BY WHICH THE FUND IS TO BE CREATED.

I have already established the principle, namely, that the earth, in its natural, uncultivated state, was, and ever would have continued to be, the *common property of the human race*; that in that state, every person would have been born to property; and that the system of landed property, by its inseparable connexion with cultivation, and with what is called civilized life, has absorbed the property of all those whom it dispossessed, without providing, as ought to have been done, an indemnification for that loss.

The fault, however, is not in the present possessors.—No complaint is intended, or ought to be alledged against them, unless they adopt the crime by opposing justice. The fault is in the system, and it has stolen imperceptibly upon the world, aided afterwards by the agrarian law of the sword. But the fault can be made to reform itself by successive generations, without diminishing or deranging the property of any of the present possessors, and yet the operation of the fund can commence, and be in full activity, the first year of its establishment, or soon after, as I shall show.

It is proposed that the payments, as already stated, be made to every person, rich or poor. It is best to make it so, to prevent invidious distinctions. It is also right it should be so, because it is in lieu of the natural inheritance, which, as a right, belongs to every man, over and above the property he may have created or inherited from those who did. Such persons as do not choose to receive it, can throw it into the common fund.

Taking it then for granted, that no person ought to be in a worse condition when born under what is called a state of civilization, than he would have been, had he been born in a state of nature, and that civilization ought to have made, and ought still to make, provision for that purpose, it can only be done by subtracting from property, a portion equal in value to the natural inheritance it has absorbed.

Various methods may be proposed for this purpose, but that which appears to be the best, not only because it will operate without deranging any present possessors, or without interfering with the collection of taxes, or *emprunts* necessary for the pur-

poses of government and the revolution, but because it will be the least troublesome and the most effectual, and also because the subtraction will be made at a time that best admits it, which is, at the moment that property is passing by the death of one person to the possession of another. In this case, the bequeather gives nothing : the receiver pays nothing. The only matter to him is, that the monopoly of natural inheritance, to which there never was a right, begins to cease in his person. A generous man would not wish it to continue, and a just man will rejoice to see it abolished.

My state of health prevents my making sufficient inquiries with respect to the doctrine of probabilities, whereon to found calculations with such degrees of certainty as they are capable of. What, therefore, I offer on this head is more the result of observation and reflection, than of received information ; but I believe it will be found to agree sufficiently enough with fact.

In the first place, taking twenty-one years as the epoch of maturity, all the property of a nation, real and personal, is always in the possession of persons above that age. It is then necessary to know as a datum of calculation, the average of years which persons above that age will live. I take this average to be about thirty years, for though many persons will live forty, fifty, or sixty years after the age of twenty-one years, others will die much sooner, and some in every year of that time.

Taking, then, thirty years as the average of time, it will give, without any material variation, one way or other, the average of time in which the whole property or capital of a nation, or a sum equal thereto, will have passed through one entire revolution in descent, that is, will have gone by deaths to new possessors ; for though, in many instances, some parts of this capital will remain forty, fifty, or sixty years in the possession of one person, other parts will have revolved two or three times before those thirty years expire, which will bring it to that average ; for were one half the capital of a nation to revolve twice in thirty years, it would produce the same fund as if the whole revolved once.

Taking, then, thirty years as the average of time in which the whole capital of a nation, or a sum equal thereto, will revolve once, the thirtieth part thereof will be the sum that will revolve every year, that is, will go by deaths to new possessors ; and this last sum being thus known, and the ratio per cent. to be subtracted

from it being determined, will give the annual amount or income of the proposed fund, to be applied as already mentioned.

In looking over the discourse of the English minister, Pitt, in his opening of what is called in England the budget, (the scheme of finance for the year 1796,) I find an estimate of the national capital of that country. As this estimate of a national capital is prepared ready to my hand, I take it as a datum to act upon. When a calculation is made upon the known capital of any nation, combined with its population, it will serve as a scale for any other nation, in proportion as its capital and population be more or less. I am the more disposed to take this estimate of Mr. Pitt, for the purpose of showing to that minister, upon his own calculation, how much better money may be employed, than in wasting it, as he has done, on the wild project of setting up Bourbon kings. What, in the name of heaven, are Bourbon kings to the people of England? It is better that the people have bread.

Mr. Pitt states the national capital of England, real and personal, to be one thousand three hundred millions sterling, which is about one-fourth part of the national capital of France, including Belgia. The event of the last harvest in each country proves that the soil of France is more productive than that of England, and that it can better support twenty-four or twenty-five millions of inhabitants than that of England can seven, or seven and a half.

The thirtieth part of this capital of 1,300,000,000*l.* is 43,333,333*l.* which is the part that will revolve every year by deaths in that country to new possessors; and the sum that will annually revolve in France in the proportion of four to one, will be about one hundred and seventy-three millions sterling. From this sum of 43,333,333*l.* annually revolving, is to be subtracted the value of the natural inheritance absorbed in it, which, perhaps, in fair justice, cannot be taken at less, and ought not to be taken for more, than a tenth part.

It will always happen, that of the property thus revolving by deaths every year, part will descend in a direct line to sons and daughters, and the other part collaterally, and the proportion will be found to be about three to one; that is, about thirty millions of the above sum will descend to direct heirs, and the remainin*g*

sum of 13,333,333*l.* to more distant relations, and part to strangers.

Considering, then, that man is always related to society, that relationship will become comparatively greater in proportion as the next of kin is more distant, it is therefore consistent with civilization to say, that where there are no direct heirs, society shall be heir to a part over and above the tenth part *due* to society. If this additional part be from five to ten or twelve per cent. in proportion as the next of kin be nearer or more remote, so as to average with the escheats that may fall, which ought always to go to society and not to the government, an addition of ten per cent. more; the produce from the annual sum of 43,333,333*l.* will be,

From 30,000,000 <i>l.</i> at ten per cent.		3,000,000 <i>l.</i>
From 13,333,333 <i>l.</i> at ten per cent. with the	}	
addition of ten		2,666,666
per cent more.		

43,333,333*l.*

5,666,666*l.*

Having thus arrived at the annual amount of the proposed fund, I come, in the next place, to speak of the population proportioned to this fund, and to compare it with the uses to which the fund is to be applied,

The population (I mean that of England) does not exceed seven millions and a half, and the number of persons above the age of fifty will in that case be about four hundred thousand. There would not, however, be more than that number that would accept the proposed ten pounds sterling per annum, though they would be entitled to it. I have no idea it would be accepted by many persons who had a yearly income of two or three hundred pounds sterling. But as we often see instances of rich people falling into sudden poverty, even at the age of sixty, they would always have the right of drawing all the arrears due to them. Four millions, therefore, of the above annual sum of 5,666,666*l.* will be required for four hundred thousand aged persons, at ten pounds sterling each.

I come now to speak of the persons annually arriving at twenty one years of age. If all the persons who died were above the age of twenty-one years, the number of persons annually arriving at that age, must be equal to the annual number of deaths, to keep the population stationary. But the greater part

die under the age of twenty-one, and therefore the number of persons annually arriving at twenty-one, will be less than half the number of deaths. The whole number of deaths upon a population of seven millions and an half, will be about 220,000 annually. The number arriving at twenty-one years of age will be about 100,000. The whole number of these will not receive the proposed fifteen pounds, for the reasons already mentioned, though, as in the former case, they would be entitled to it. Admitting then that a tenth part declined receiving it, the amount would stand thus ;

Fund annually		5,666,666 <i>l</i> .
To 400,000 aged persons at 10 <i>l</i> . each	4,000,000 <i>l</i> .	
To 90,000 persons of 11 years, 15 <i>l</i> . ster. each	1,350,000	
	<hr/>	5,350,000
		<hr/>
		Remains 316,666 <i>l</i> .

There are, in every country, a number of blind and lame persons, totally incapable of earning a livelihood. But as it will always happen that the greater number of blind persons will be among those who are above the age of fifty years, they will be provided for in that class. The remaining sum of 316,666*l*. will provide for the lame and blind under that age, at the same rate of 10*l*. annually for each person.

Having now gone through all the necessary calculations, and stated the particulars of the plan, I shall conclude with some observations.

It is not charity but a right ; not bounty but justice, that I am pleading for. The contrast of affluence and wretchedness continually meeting and offending the eye, is like dead and living bodies chained together. Though I care as little about riches as any man, I am a friend to riches because they are capable of good. I care not how affluent some may be, provided that none be miserable in consequence of it. But it is impossible to enjoy affluence with the felicity it is capable of being enjoyed, whilst so much misery is mingled in the scene. The sight of the misery, and the unpleasant sensations it suggests, which, though they may be suffocated, cannot be extinguished, are a greater drawback upon the felicity of affluence, than the proposed 10 per cent. upon

property is worth. He that would not give the one to get rid of the other, has no charity, even for himself.

There are, in every country, some magnificent charities established by individuals. It is, however, but little that any individual can do, when the whole extent of the misery to be relieved is considered. He may satisfy his conscience, but not his heart. He may give all that he has, and that all will relieve but little. It is only by organizing civilization upon such principles as to act like a system of pulleys, that the whole weight of misery can be removed.

The plan here proposed will reach the whole. It will immediately relieve and take out of view three classes of wretchedness. The blind, the lame, and the aged poor; and it will furnish the rising generation with means to prevent their becoming poor; and it will do this, without deranging or interfering with any national measures. To show that this will be the case, it is sufficient to observe, that the operation and effect of the plan will, in all cases, be the same, as if every individual were *voluntarily* to make his will, and dispose of his property, in the manner here proposed.

But it is justice, and not charity, that is the principle of the plan. In all great cases it is necessary to have a principle more universally active than charity; and, with respect to justice, it ought not to be left to the choice of detached individuals, whether they will do justice or not.—Considering, then, the plan on the ground of justice, it ought to be the act of the whole, growing spontaneously out of the principles of the revolution, and the reputation of it ought to be national and not individual.

A plan upon this principle would benefit the revolution, by the energy that springs from the consciousness of justice. It would multiply also the national resources; for property, like vegetation, increases by offsets. When a young couple begin the world, the difference is exceedingly great, whether they begin with nothing or with fifteen pounds a piece. With this aid they could buy a cow, and implements to cultivate a few acres of land; and instead of becoming burdens upon society, which is always the case, where children are produced faster than they can be fed, would be put in the way of becoming useful and profitable citizens. The national domains also would sell the better if pecuniary aids were provided to cultivate them in small lots.

It is the practice of what has unjustly obtained the name of civilization (and the practice merits not to be called either charity or policy) to make some provision for persons becoming poor and wretched, only at the time they become so. Would it not even as a matter of economy be far better, to advise means to prevent their becoming poor. This can best be done, by making every person when arrived at the age of twenty-one years, an inheritor of something to begin with. The rugged face of society, chequered with the extremes of affluence and want, proves that some extraordinary violence has been committed upon it, and calls on justice for redress. The great mass of the poor, in all countries are become an hereditary race, and it is next to impossible for them to get out of that state of themselves. It ought also to be observed that this mass increases in all countries that are called civilized. More persons fall annually into it, than get out of it.

Though in a plan in which justice and humanity are the foundation-principles, interest ought not to be admitted into the calculation, yet it is always of advantage to the establishment of any plan, to show that it is beneficial as a matter of interest. The success of any proposed plan submitted to public consideration, must finally depend on the numbers interested in supporting it, united with the justice of its principles.

The plan here proposed will benefit all, without injuring any. It will consolidate the interest of the republic with that of the individual. To the numerous class dispossessed of their natural inheritance by the system of landed property, it will be an act of national justice. To persons dying possessed of moderate fortunes, it will operate as a tontine to their children, more beneficial than the sum of money paid into the fund : and it will give to the accumulation of riches a degree of security, that none of the old governments of Europe, now tottering on their foundations, can give.

I do not suppose that more than one family in ten, in any of the countries of Europe, has, when the head of the family dies, a clear property left of five hundred pounds sterling. To all such, the plan is advantageous. That property would pay fifty pounds into the fund, and if there were only two children under age, they would receive fifteen pounds each, (thirty pounds,) on coming of age, and be entitled to ten pounds a-year after fifty. It is from the overgrown acquisition of property that the fund will

support itself; and I know that the possessors of such property in England, though they would eventually be benefited by the protection of nine-tenths of it, will exclaim against the plan. But without entering into any inquiry how they came by that property, let them recollect that they have been the advocates of this war and that Mr. Pitt has already laid on more new taxes to be raised annually upon the people of England, and that for supporting the despotism of Austria and the Bourbons, against the liberties of France, than would pay annually all the sums proposed in this plan.

I have made the calculations stated in this plan, upon what is called personal, as well as upon landed property. The reason for making it upon land is already explained; and the reason for taking personal property into the calculation, is equally well founded though on a different principle. Land, as before said is the free gift of the Creator in common to the human race. Personal property is the *effect of society*; and it is as impossible for an individual to acquire personal property without the aid of society, as it is for him to make land originally. Separate an individual from society, and give him an island or a continent to possess, and he cannot acquire personal property. He cannot be rich. So inseparably are the means connected with the end, in all cases, that where the former do not exist, the latter cannot be obtained. All accumulation, therefore, of personal property, beyond what a man's own hands produce, is derived to him by living in society; and he owes on every principle of justice, of gratitude, and of civilization, a part of that accumulation back again to society from whence the whole came. This is putting the matter on a general principle, and perhaps it is best to do so; for, if we examine the case minutely, it will be found, that the accumulation of personal property is, in many instances, the effect of paying too little for the labor that produced it; the consequence of which is, that the working hand perishes in old age, and the employer abounds in affluence. It is, perhaps, impossible to proportion exactly the price of labor to the profits it produces; and it will also be said, as an apology for the injustice, that were a workman to receive an increase of wages daily, he would not save it against old age, nor be much better for it in the interim. Make, then, society the treasurer, to guard it for him

in a common fund ; for it is no reason, that because he might not make a good use of it for himself, that another should take it.

The state of civilization that has prevailed throughout Europe, is as unjust in its principle, as it is horrid in its effects ; and it is the consciousness of this, and the apprehension that such a state cannot continue, when once investigation begins in any country, that makes the possessors of property dread every idea of a revolution. It is the hazard and not the principles of a revolution that retards their progress. This being the case, it is necessary as well for the protection of property, as for the sake of justice and humanity, to form a system, that whilst it preserves one part of society from wretchedness, shall secure the other from deprecation.

The superstitious awe, the enslaving reverence, that formerly surrounded affluence, is passing away in all countries, and leaving the possessor of property to the convulsion of accidents. When wealth and splendor, instead of fascinating the multitude, excite emotions of disgust ; when, instead of drawing forth admiration, it is beheld as an insult upon wretchedness ; when the ostentatious appearance it makes, serves to call the right of it in question, the case of property becomes critical, and it is only in a system of justice that the possessor can contemplate security.

To remove the danger, it is necessary to remove the antipathies, and this can only be done by making property productive of a national blessing, extending to every individual. When the riches of one man above another shall increase the national fund in the same proportion ; when it shall be seen that the prosperity of that fund depends on the prosperity of individuals ; when the more riches a man acquires, the better it shall be for the general mass ; it is then that antipathies will cease, and property be placed on the permanent basis of national interest and protection.

I have no property in France to become subject to the plan I propose. What I have, which is not much, is in the United States of America. But I will pay one hundred pounds sterling towards this fund in France, the instant it shall be established ; and I will pay the same sum in England, whenever a similar establishment shall take place in that country.

A revolution in the state of civilization, is the necessary companion of revolutions in the system of government. If a revolu-

tion in any country be from bad to good, or from good to bad, the state of what is called civilization in that country, must be made conformable thereto, to give that revolution effect. Despotic government supports itself by abject civilization, in which debasement of the human mind, and wretchedness in the mass of the people, are the chief criterions. Such governments consider man merely as an animal ; that the exercise of intellectual faculty is not his privilege ; *that he has nothing to do with the laws, but to obey them ;** and they politically depend more upon breaking the spirit of the people by poverty, than they fear enraging it by desperation.

It is a revolution in the state of civilization, that will give perfection to the revolution of France. Already the conviction that government, by representation, is the true system of government, is spreading itself fast in the world. The reasonableness of it can be seen by all. The justness of it makes itself felt even by its opposers. But when a system of civilization, growing out of that system of government, shall be so organized, that not a man or woman born in the republic, but shall inherit some means of beginning the world, and see before them the certainty of escaping the miseries that under other governments accompany old age, the revolution of France will have an advocate and an ally in the hearts of all nations.

An army of principles will penetrate where an army of soldiers cannot ; it will succeed where diplomatic management would fail ; it is neither the Rhine, the Channel, nor the Ocean, that can arrest its progress : it will march on the horizon of the world, and it will conquer.

MEANS FOR CARRYING THE PROPOSED PLAN INTO EXECUTION,
AND TO RENDER IT AT THE SAME TIME CONDUCTIVE TO THE
PUBLIC INTEREST.

I. Each canton shall elect in its primary assemblies, three persons, as commissioners for that canton, who shall take cognizance, and keep a register of all matters happening in that canton, conformable to the charter that shall be established by law, for carrying this plan into execution.

* Expression of Horsley, an English bishop, in the English parliament.

II. The law shall fix the manner in which the property of deceased persons shall be ascertained.

III. When the amount of the property of any deceased person shall be ascertained, the principal heir to that property, or the eldest of the co-heirs, if of lawful age, or if under age, the person authorized by the will of the deceased to represent him or them, shall give bond to the commissioners of the canton, to pay the said tenth part thereof within the space of one year, in four equal quarterly payments, or sooner, at the choice of the payers. One half of the whole property shall remain as security until the bond be paid off.

IV. The bond shall be registered in the office of the commissioners of the canton, and the original bonds shall be deposited in the national bank at Paris. The bank shall publish every quarter of a year the amount of the bonds in its possession, and also the bonds that shall have been paid off, or what parts thereof, since the last quarterly publication.

V. The national bank shall issue bank notes upon the security of the bonds in its possession. The notes so issued, shall be applied to pay the pensions of aged persons, and the compensations to persons arriving at twenty-one years of age. It is both reasonable and generous to suppose, that persons not under immediate necessity, will suspend their right of drawing on the fund, until it acquire, as it will do, a greater degree of ability. In this case, it is proposed, than an honorary register be kept in each canton, of the names of the persons thus suspending that right, at least during the present war.

VI. As the inheritors of property must always take up their bonds in four quarterly payments, or sooner if they choose, there will always be *numeraire* arriving at the bank after the expiration of the first quarter, to exchange for the bank notes that shall be brought in.

VII. The bank notes being thus put in circulation, upon the best of all possible security, that of actual property, to more than four times the amount of the bonds upon which the notes are issued, and with *numeraire* continually arriving at the bank to exchange or pay them off whenever they shall be presented for that purpose, they will acquire a permanent value in all parts of the republic. They can therefore be received in payment of taxes or

emprunts equal to *numeraire*, because the government can always receive *numeraire* for them at the bank.

VIII. It will be necessary that the payments of the ten per cent. be made in *numeraire*, for the first year, from the establishment of the plan. But after the expiration of the first year, the inheritors of property may pay ten per cent. either in bank notes issued upon the fund, or in *numeraire*. If the payments be in *numeraire*, it will lie as a deposit at the bank, to be exchanged for a quantity of notes equal to that amount; and if in notes issued upon the fund, it will cause a demand upon the fund, equal thereto; and thus the operation of the plan will create means to carry itself into execution.

THOMAS PAINE.

THE PEOPLE OF FRANCE,

AND TO

THE FRENCH ARMIES.



WHEN an extraordinary measure, not warranted by established constitutional rules, and justifiable only on the supreme law of absolute necessity, bursts suddenly upon us, we must, in order to form a true judgment thereon, carry our researches back to the times that preceded and occasioned it. Taking then the subject up, with respect to the event of the eighteenth of Fructidor on this ground, I go to examine the state of things prior to that period. I begin with the establishment of the constitution of the year 3 of the French Republic.

A better *organized* constitution has never yet been devised by human wisdom. It is, in its organization, free from all the vices and defects to which other forms of government are more or less subject. I will speak first of the legislative body, because the legislature is, in the natural order of things, the first power ; the executive is the first magistrate. .

By arranging the legislative body into two divisions, as is done in the French constitution, the one, (the council of five hundred,) whose part it is to conceive and propose laws ; the other, a council of ancients, to review, approve, or reject the laws proposed ; all the security is given that can arise from coolness of

reflection acting upon, or correcting the precipitancy or enthusiasm of conception and imagination. It is seldom that our first thought, even upon any subject, is sufficiently just.

The policy of renewing the legislature by a third part each year, though not entirely new, either in theory or in practice, is, nevertheless, one of the modern improvements in the science of government. It prevents, on the one hand, that convulsion and precipitate change of measures, into which a nation might be surprised by the going out of the whole legislature at the same time, and the instantaneous election of a new one. On the other hand, it excludes that common interest from taking place, that might tempt a whole legislature, whose term of duration expired at once, to usurp the right of continuance. I go now to speak of the executive.

It is a principle uncontrovertible by reason, that each of the parts by which government is composed, should be so constructed as to be in perpetual maturity. We should laugh at the idea of a council of five hundred, or a council of ancients, or a parliament, or any national assembly, who should be all children in leading strings and in the cradle, or be all sick, insane, deaf, dumb, lame or blind at the same time ; or be all upon crutches, tottering with age or infirmities. Any form of government that was so constructed, as to admit the possibility of such cases happening to a whole legislature, would justly be the ridicule of the world ; and on a parity of reasoning, it is equally as ridiculous that the same cases should happen in that part of government which is called the executive ; yet this is the contemptible condition to which an executive is always subject, and which is often happening, when it is placed in an hereditary individual called a king. When that individual is in either of the cases before mentioned, the whole executive is in the same case ; for himself is the whole. He is then, (as an executive,) the ridiculous picture of what a legislature would be, if all its members were in the same case. The one is a whole made up of parts, the other, a whole without parts ; and any thing happening to the one, (as a part or section of the government,) is parallel to the same thing happening to the other.

As, therefore, an hereditary executive called a king is a perfect absurdity in itself, any attachment to it is equally as absurd. It is neither instinct or reason ; and if this attachment is what is

called royalism in France, then is a royalist inferior in character to every species of the animal world ; for what can that being be, who acts neither by instinct nor by reason ? Such a being merits rather our derision than our pity ; and it is only when it assumes to act its folly, that it becomes capable of provoking republican indignation. In every other case it is too contemptible to excite anger. For my own part, when I contemplate the self-evident absurdity of the thing, I can scarcely permit myself to believe that there exists in the high-minded nation of France, such a mean and silly animal as a royalist.

As it required but a single glance of thought to see, (as is before said,) that all the parts of which government is composed, must be at all times in a state of full maturity, it was not possible that men acting under the influence of reason, could, in forming a constitution, admit an hereditary executive, any more than an hereditary legislature. I go, therefore, to examine the other cases.

In the first place, (rejecting the hereditary system,) shall the executive by election, be an *individual*, or a *plurality*.

An individual by election is almost as bad as the hereditary system, except that there is always a better chance of not having an idiot. But he will never be any thing more than a chief of a party, and none but those of that party will have access to him. He will have no person to consult with of a standing equal with himself, and consequently be deprived of the advantages arising from equal discussion. Those whom he admits in consultation, will be ministers of his own appointment, who, if they displease by their advice, must expect to be dismissed. The authority, also, is too great, and the business too complicated, to be intrusted to the ambition or the judgment of an individual ; and, besides these cases, the sudden change of measures that might follow by the going out of an individual executive, and the election of a new one, would hold the affairs of a nation in a state of perpetual uncertainty. We come then to the case of a plural executive.

It must be sufficiently plural, to give opportunity to discuss all the various subjects that in the course of national business may come before it ; and yet not so numerous as to endanger the necessary secrecy that certain cases, such as those of war, require.

Establishing, then, plurality as a principle, the only question is, What shall be the number of that plurality?

Three are too few either for the variety or the quantity of business. The constitution has adopted *five*; and experience has shown, from the commencement of the constitution to the time of the election of the new legislative third, that this number of directors, when well chosen, is sufficient for all national executive purposes; and, therefore, a greater number would be only an unnecessary expense. That the measures of the directory, during that period, were well concerted, is proved by their success; and their being well concerted, shows they were well discussed; and, therefore, that *five* is a sufficient number with respect to discussion; and, on the other hand, the secret, whenever there was one, (as in the case of the expedition to Ireland,) was well kept, and, therefore, the number is not too great to endanger the necessary secrecy.

The reason why the two councils are numerous is not from the necessity of their being so, on account of business, but because that every part of the republic shall find and feel itself in the national representation.

Next to the general principle of government by representation, the excellence of the French constitution consists in providing means to prevent that abuse of power that might arise by letting it remain too long in the same hands. This wise precaution pervades every part of the constitution. Not only the legislature is renewable by a third every year, but the president of each of the councils is renewable every month; and of the directory, one member each year, and its president every three months. Those who formed the constitution cannot be accused of having contrived for themselves. The constitution, in this respect, is as impartially constructed as if those who framed it were to die as soon as they had finished their work.

The only defect in the constitution is that of having narrowed the right of election; and it is, in a great measure, to this narrowing the right, that the last elections have not generally been good. My ancient colleagues will, I presume, pardon my saying this to day, when they recollect my arguments against this defect, at the time the constitution was discussed in the Convention.

I will close this part of the subject by remarking on one of the most vulgar and absurd *sayings* or dogmas that ever yet imposed

itself upon the world, which is, "*that a republic is fit only for a small country, and a monarchy for a large one.*" Ask those who say this, their reasons why it is so, and they can give none.

Let us then examine the case.—If the quantity of knowledge in a government ought to be proportioned to the extent of a country, and the magnitude and variety of its affairs, it follows, as an undeniable result, that this absurd dogma is false, and that the reverse of it is true. As to what is called monarchy, if it be adaptable to any country, it can only be so to a small one, whose concerns are few, little complicated, and all within the comprehension of an individual. But when we come to a country of large extent, vast population, and whose affairs are great, numerous, and various, it is the representative republican system only, that can collect into the government the quantity of knowledge, necessary to govern to the best national advantage. Montesquieu, who was strongly inclined to republican government, sheltered himself under this absurd dogma; for he had always the Bastille before his eyes when he was speaking of republics, and therefore *pretended* not to write for France. Condorcet governed himself by the same caution, but it was caution only, for no sooner had he the opportunity of speaking fully out than he did it. When I say this of Condorcet, I know it as a fact. In a paper published in Paris, July 1792, entitled, "*The Republican, or the Defender of representative Government,*" is a piece signed *Thomas Paine*. That piece was concerted between Condorcet and myself. I wrote the original in English, and Condorcet translated it. The object of it was to expose the absurdity and falsehood of the above mentioned dogma.

Having thus concisely glanced at the excellencies of the constitution, and the superiority of the representative system of government, over every other system, (if any other can be called a system,) I come to speak of the circumstances that have intervened between the time the constitution was established, and the event that took place on the 18th of Fructidor of the present year.

Almost as suddenly as the morning light dissipates darkness, did the establishment of the constitution change the face of affairs in France. Security succeeded to terror, prosperity to distress, plenty to famine, and confidence increased as the days multiplied, until the coming of the new third. A series of victories,

unequaled in the world, followed each other, almost too rapidly to be counted, and too numerous to be remembered. The coalition, every where defeated and confounded, crumbled away like a ball of dust in the hand of a giant. Every thing, during that period, was acted on such a mighty scale, that reality appeared a dream, and truth outstript romance. It may figuratively be said, that the Rhine and the Rubicon (Germany and Italy) replied in triumphs to each other, and the echoing Alps prolonged the shout. I will not here dishonor a great description by noticing too much the English government. It is sufficient paradoxically to say, that in the magnitude of its littleness, it cringed, it intrigued, and sought protection in corruption.

Though the achievements of these days might give trophies to a nation and laurels to its heroes, they derive their full radiance of glory from the principle they inspired and the object they accomplished. Desolation, chains, and slavery had marked the progress of former wars; but to conquer for liberty had never been thought of. To receive the degrading submission of a distressed and subjugated people, and insultingly permit them to live, made the chief triumph of former conquerors; but to receive them with fraternity, to break their chains, to tell them they are free, and teach them to be so, make a new volume in the history of man.

Amidst those national honors, and when only two enemies remained, both of whom had solicited peace, and one of them had signed preliminaries, the election of the new third commenced. Every thing was made easy to them. All difficulties had been conquered before they arrived at the government. They came in the olive days of the revolution, and all they had to do was not to do mischief.

It was, however, not difficult to foresee, that the elections would not be generally good. The horrid days of Robespierre were still remembered, and the gratitude due to those who had put an end to them was forgotten.

Thousands who, by passive approbation during that tremendous scene, had experienced no suffering, assumed the merit of being the loudest against it. Their cowardice in not opposing it, became courage when it was over. They exclaimed against terrorism, as if they had been the heroes that overthrew it, and rendered themselves ridiculous by fantastically overacting moderation. The most noisy of this class, that I have met with, are

those who suffered nothing. They became all things, at all times to all men ; till at last they laughed at principle. It was the real republicans who suffered most during the time of Robespierre. The persecution began upon them on the 31st of May, and ceased only by the exertions of the remnant that survived.

In such a confused state of things as preceded the late elections, the public mind was put into a condition of being easily deceived ; and it was almost natural that the hypocrite would stand the best chance of being elected into the new third. Had those who, since their election, have thrown the public affairs into confusion by counter revolutionary measures, declared themselves before hand, they would have been denounced instead of being chosen. Deception was necessary to their success. The constitution obtained a full establishment ; the revolution was considered as complete ; and the war on the eve of termination. In such a situation, the mass of the people, fatigued by a long revolution, sought repose ; and in their elections they looked out for quiet men. They unfortunately found hypocrites. Would any of the primary assemblies have voted for a civil war ? Certainly they would not. But the electoral assemblies of some departments have chosen men, whose measures, since their election, tended to no other end but to provoke it. Either, those electors have deceived their constituents of the primary assemblies, or they have been themselves deceived in the choice they made of deputies.

That there were some direct but secret conspirators in the new third, can scarcely admit of a doubt ; but it is most reasonable to suppose, that a great part was seduced by the vanity of thinking they could do better, than those had done, whom they succeeded. Instead of trusting to experience, they attempted experiments. This counter-disposition prepared them to fall in with any measures contrary to former measures ; and that without seeing, and probably without suspecting, the end to which they led.

No sooner were the members of the new third arrived at the seat of government, than expectation was excited to see how they would act. Their motions were watched by all parties ; and it was impossible for them to steal a march unobserved. They had it in their power to do great good, or great mischief. A firm and manly conduct on their part, uniting with that of the directory and their colleagues, would have terminated the war. But the

moment before them was not the moment of hesitation. He that hesitates in such situation is lost.

The first public act of the Council of Five Hundred was the election of Pichegru to the presidency of that council. He arrived at it by a very large majority, and the public voice was in his favor. I, among the rest, was one who rejoiced at it. But if the defection of Pichegru was at that time known to Conde, and consequently to Pitt, it unveils the cause that retarded all negotiations for peace. They interpreted that election into a signal of a counter-revolution, and were waiting for it ; and they mistook the respect shown to Pichegru, founded on the supposition of his integrity, as a symptom of national revolt. Judging of things by their own foolish ideas of government, they ascribed appearances to causes between which there was no connection. Every thing on their part has been a comedy of errors, and the actors have been chased from the stage.

Two or three decades of the new sessions passed away without any thing very material taking place ; but matters soon began to explain themselves. The first thing that struck the public mind was, that no more was heard of negotiations for peace, and that public business stood still. It was not the object of the conspirators there should be peace ; but as it was necessary to conceal that object, the constitution was ransacked to find pretences for delays. In vain did the directory expose to them the state of the finances and the wants of the army. The committee, charged with that business, trifled away its time by a series of unproductive reports, and continued to sit only to produce more. Every thing necessary to be done was neglected, and every thing improper was attempted. Pichegru occupied himself about forming a national guard for the councils ; the suspicious signal of war. Camille Jordan, about priests and bells, and the emigrants, with whom he had associated during the two years he was in England. Willot and Delarue attacked the directory : their object was to displace some one of the directors, to get in another of their own. Their motives with respect to the age of Barras (who is as old as he wishes to be, and has been a little too old for them) were too obvious not to be seen through.

In this suspensive state of things, the public mind, filled with apprehensions, became agitated, and without knowing what it might be, looked for some extraordinary event. It saw, for it

could not avoid seeing, that things could not remain long in the state they were in ; but it dreaded a convulsion. That spirit of triflingness which it had indulged too freely when in a state of security, and which it is probable the new agents had interpreted into indifference about the success of the republic, assumed a serious aspect that afforded to conspiracy no hope of aid ; but still it went on. It plunged itself into new measures with the same ill success, and the further it went, the further the public mind retired. The conspiracy saw nothing around it to give it encouragement.

The obstinacy, however, with which it persevered in its repeated attacks upon the directory, in framing laws in favor of emigrants and refractory priests, and in every thing inconsistent with the immediate safety of the republic, and which served to encourage the enemy to prolong the war, admitted of no other direct interpretation than that something was rotten in the council of Five Hundred. The evidence of circumstances became every day too visible not to be seen, and too strong to be explained away. Even as errors, (to say no worse of them,) they are not entitled to apology ; for where knowledge is a duty, ignorance is a crime.

The more serious republicans, who had better opportunities than the generality had, of knowing the state of politics, began to take the alarm, and formed themselves into a society, by the name of the constitutional circle. It is the only society of which I have been a member in France ; and I went to this because it was become necessary that the friends of the republic should rally round the standard of the constitution. I met there several of the original patriots of the revolution ; I do not mean of the last order of Jacobins, but of the first of that name. The faction in the council of Five Hundred, who, finding no council from the public, began to be frightened at appearances, fortified itself against the dread of this society, by passing a law to dissolve it. The constitutionality of the law was at least doubtful : but the society, that it might not give the example of exasperating matters already too much inflamed, suspended its meetings.

A matter, however, of much greater moment soon after presented itself. It was the march of four regiments ; some of whom, in the line of their route, had to pass within about twelve leagues of Paris, which is the boundary the constitution had fixed as the distance of the armed force from the legislative body. In

another state of things, such a circumstance would not have been noticed. But conspiracy is quick of suspicion; and the fear which the faction in the council of Five Hundred manifested upon this occasion, could not have suggested itself to innocent men; neither would innocent men have expostulated with the directory upon the case, in the manner these men did. The question they urged went to extort from the directory, and to make known to the enemy, what the destination of the troops was. The leaders of the faction conceived that the troops were marching against them; and the conduct they adopted in consequence of it, was sufficient to justify the measure, even if it had been so. From what other motive than the consciousness of their own designs, could they have fear? The troops, in every instance, had been the gallant defenders of the republic, and the openly declared friends of the constitution; the directory had been the same, and if the faction were not of a different description, neither fear nor suspicion could have had place among them.

All those manœuvres in the council were acted under the most professional attachment to the constitution; and this as necessarily served to enfeeble their projects. It is exceedingly difficult, and next to impossible, to conduct a conspiracy, and still more so to give it success, in a popular government. The disguised and feigned pretences which men in such cases are obliged to act in the face of the public, suppress the action of the faculties, and give even to natural courage the features of timidity. They are not half the men they would be, where no disguise is necessary. It is impossible to be a hypocrite, and to be brave at the same instant.

The faction, by the imprudence of its measures, upon the march of the troops, and upon the declarations of the officers and soldiers to support the republic, and the constitution against all open or concealed attempts to overturn them, had gotten itself involved with the army, and in effect declared itself a party against it. On the one hand, laws were proposed to admit emigrants and refractory priests as free citizens; and on the other hand to exclude the militaries from Paris, and to punish the soldiers who had declared to support the republic. In the mean time all negociations for peace went backward; and the enemy still recruiting its forces, rested to take advantage of circumstances. Excepting the cessation of hostilities, it was a state worse than war.

If all this was not a conspiracy, it had at least the features of one, and was pregnant with the same mischiefs. The eyes of the faction could not avoid being open to the dangers to which it obstinately exposed the republic; yet still it persisted. During this scene, the journals devoted to the faction, were repeatedly announcing the near approach of peace with Austria and with England, and often asserting it was concluded. This falsehood could be intended for no other purpose, than to keep the eyes of the people shut against the dangers to which they were exposed.

Taking all circumstances together, it was impossible that such a state of things could continue long; and at length it was resolved to bring it to an issue. There is good reason to believe that the affair of the 18th Fructidor (Sept. 4) was intended to have had place two days before; but on recollecting that it was the 2d of September, a day mournful in the annals of the revolution, it was postponed. When the issue arrived, the faction found to its cost, it had no party among the public. It had sought its own disasters, and was left to suffer the consequences. Foreign enemies, as well as those of the interior, if any such there be, ought to see in the event of this day, that all expectation of aid from any part of the public, in support of a counter revolution, is delusion. In a state of security the thoughtless, who trembled at terror, may laugh at principles of liberty (for they have laughed) but it is one thing to indulge a foolish laugh; it is quite another thing to surrender liberty.

Considering the event of the 18th Fructidor in a political light, it is one of those that is justifiable only on the supreme law of absolute necessity, and it is the necessity abstracted from the event that is to be deplored. The event itself is matter of joy. Whether the manœuvres in the council of Five Hundred were the conspiracy of a few, aided by the perverseness of many, or whether it had a deeper root, the dangers were the same. It was impossible to go on. Every thing was at stake, and all national business at a stand. The case reduced itself to a simple alternative—shall the republic be destroyed by the darksome manœuvres of a faction, or shall it be preserved by an extraneous act?

During the American revolution, and that after the state constitutions were established, particular cases arose that rendered it necessary to act in a manner that would have been treasonable in a state of peace. At one time congress invested general Wash-

ington with dictatorial power. At another time the government of Pennsylvania suspended itself and declared martial law. It was the necessity of the times only that made the apology of those extraneous measures. But who was it that produced the necessity of an extraneous measure in France? A faction, and that in the face of prosperity and success. Its conduct is without apology; and it is on the faction only that the extraneous measure has fallen. The public has suffered no inconvenience. If there are some men more disposed than others not to act severely, I have a right to place myself in that class; the whole of my political life invariably proves it: yet I cannot see, taking all parts of the case together, what else, or what better, could have been done, than has been done. It was a great stroke, applied in a great crisis, that crushed in an instant, and without the loss of a life, all the hopes of the enemy, and restored tranquillity to the interior.

The event was ushered in by the discharge of two cannon at four in the morning, and was the only noise that was heard throughout the day. It naturally excited a movement among the Parisians to enquire the cause. They soon learned it, and the countenance they carried was easy to be interpreted. It was that of a people who, for some time past, had been oppressed with apprehensions of some direful event, and who felt themselves suddenly relieved, by finding what it was. Every one went about his business, or followed his curiosity in quietude. It resembled the cheerful tranquillity of the day when Louis XVI. absconded in 1791, and like that day it served to open the eyes of the nation.

If we take a review of the various events, as well conspiracies as commotions, that have succeeded each other in this revolution, we shall see how the former have wasted consumptively away, and the consequences of the latter have softened. The 31st May and its consequences were terrible. That of the 9th and 10th Thermidor, though glorious for the republic, as it overthrew one of the most horrid and cruel despotisms that ever raged, was nevertheless marked with many circumstances of severe and continued retaliation. The commotions of Germinal and Prairial of the year 3, and of Vendemaire of the year 4, were many degrees below those that preceded them, and affected but a small part of the public. This of Pichegru and his associates has been

crushed in an instant, without the stain of blood, and without involving the public in the least inconvenience.

These events taken in a series, mark the progress of the republic from disorder to stability. The contrary of this is the case in all parts of the British dominions. There, commotions are on an ascending scale ; every one is higher than the former. That of the sailors had nearly been the overthrow of the government. But the most potent of all is the invisible commotion in the bank. It works with the silence of time, and the certainty of death. Every thing happening in France is curable ; but this is beyond the reach of nature or invention.

Leaving the event of the 18th Fructidor to justify itself by the necessity that occasioned it, and glorify itself by the happiness of its consequences, I come to cast a coup-d'œil on the present state of affairs.

We have seen by the lingering condition of the negociations for peace, that nothing was to be expected from them, in the situation that things stood prior to the 18th Fructidor. The armies had done wonders, but those wonders were rendered unproductive by the wretched manœuvres of a faction. New exertions are now necessary to repair the mischiefs which that faction has done. The electoral bodies, in some departments, who by an injudicious choice, or a corrupt influence, have sent improper deputies to the legislature, have some atonement to make to their country. The evil originated with them, and the least they can do is to be among the foremost to repair it.

It is, however, in vain to lament an evil that is past. There is neither manhood nor policy in grief ; and it often happens that an error in politics, like an error in war, admits of being turned to greater advantage than if it had not occurred. The enemy, encouraged by that error, presumes too much, and becomes doubly foiled by the re-action. England, unable to conquer, has stooped to corrupt ; and defeated in the last, as in the first, she is in a worse condition than before. Continually increasing her crimes, she increases the measure of her atonement, and multiplies the sacrifices she must make to obtain peace. Nothing but the most obstinate stupidity could have induced her to let slip the opportunity when it was within her reach. In addition to the prospect of new expenses, she is now, to use Mr. Pitt's own figurative expression against France, *not only on the brink, but in*

the gulph of bankruptcy. There is no longer any mystery in paper money. Call it assignats, mandats, exchequer bills, or bank notes, it is still the same. Time has solved the problem, and experience has fixed its fate.

The government of that unfortunate country discovers its faithlessness so much, that peace, on any terms with her, is scarcely worth obtaining. Of what use is peace with a government that will employ that peace for no other purpose than to repair, as far as it is possible, her shattered finances and broken credit, and then to war again? Four times within less than ten years, from the time the American war closed, has the Anglo-germanic government of England been meditating fresh war. First with France, on account of Holland, in 1787; afterwards with Russia; then with Spain, on account of Nootka Sound; and a second time against France, to overthrow her revolution. Sometimes that government employs Prussia against Austria; at another time Austria against Prussia; and always one or the other, or both, against France. Peace with such a government is only a treacherous cessation of hostilities.

The frequency of wars on the part of England, within the last century, more than before, must have had some cause that did not exist prior to that epoch. It is not difficult to discover what that cause is. It is the mischievous compound of an elector of the Germanic body and a king of England; and which necessarily must, at some day or other, become an object of attention to France. That one nation has not a right to interfere in the *internal* government of another nation, is admitted; and in this point of view, France has no right to dictate to England what its form of government shall be. If it choose to have a thing called a king, or whether that king shall be a man or an ass, is a matter with which France has no business. But whether an elector of the Germanic body shall be king of England, is an *external* case, and with which France and every other nation, who suffers inconvenience and injury in consequence of it, has a right to interfere.

It is from this mischievous compound of elector and king, that originates a great part of the troubles that vex the continent of Europe; and with respect to England, it has been the cause of her immense national debt, the ruin of her finances, and the insolvency of her bank. All intrigues on the continent, in which England is a party, or becomes involved, are generated by, and act

through the medium of this Anglo-germanic compound. It will be necessary to dissolve it. Let the elector retire to his electorate, and the world will have peace.

England has, herself, given examples of interference in matters of this kind, and that in cases where injury was only apprehended. She engaged in a long and expensive war against France (called the succession war) to prevent a grand-son of Louis the fourteenth being king of Spain; because, said she, *it will be injurious to me*; and she has been fighting and intriguing against what was called the family-compact ever since. In 1787 she threatened France with war to prevent a connection between France and Holland; and in all her propositions of peace to-day she is dictating separations. But if she look at the Anglo-germanic compact at home, called the Hanover succession, she cannot avoid seeing, that France necessarily must, some day or other, take up that subject, and make the return of the elector to his electorate one of the conditions of peace. There will be no lasting peace between the two countries till this be done, and the sooner it be done the better will it be for both.

I have not been in any company where this matter has been a topic, that did not see it in the light it is here stated. Even Barthelemy, when he first came to the directory (and Barthelemy was never famous for patriotism) acknowledged in my hearing, and in company with Derche, secretary to the legation at Lille, the connection of an elector of Germany and a king of England was injurious to France. I do not, however, mention it from a wish to embarrass the negociation for peace. The directory has fixed its *ultimatum*; but if that ultimatum be rejected, the obligation to adhere to it is discharged, and a new one may be assumed. So wretchedly has Pitt managed his opportunities, that every succeeding negociation has ended in terms more against him than the former. If the directory had bribed him, he could not serve its interest better than he does. He serves it as lord North served that of America, which finished in the discharge of his master.*

* The father of Pitt, when a member of the house of commons, exclaiming one day, during a former war, against the enormous and ruinous expense of German connections, as the offspring of the Hanover succession, and borrowing a metaphor from the story of Prometheus, cried out: "*Thus, like Prometheus, is Britain chained to the barren rock of Hanover, whilst the imperial eagle preys upon her vitals.*"

Thus far I had written when the negotiation at Lille became suspended, in consequence of which, I delayed the publication, that the ideas suggested in this letter might not intrude themselves during the interval. The ultimatum offered by the directory, as the terms of peace, was more moderate than the government of England had a right to expect. That government, though the provoker of the war, and the first that committed hostilities by sending away the ambassador Chauvelin,* had formerly talked of demanding from France, *indemnification for the past and security for the future*. France, in her turn, might have retorted, and demanded the same from England; but she did not. As it was England that, in consequence of her bankruptcy, solicited peace, France offered it to her on the simple condition of her restoring the islands she had taken. The ultimatum has been rejected, and the negotiation broken off. The spirited part of France will say, *tant mieux*, so much the better.

How the people of England feel on the breaking up of the negotiation, which was entirely the act of their own government, is best known to themselves; but from what I know of the two nations, France ought to hold herself perfectly indifferent about a peace with the government of England. Every day adds new strength to France and new embarrassments to her enemy. The resources of the one increase, as those of the other become exhausted. England is now reduced to the same system of paper money from which France has emerged, and we all know the inevitable fate of that system. It is not a victory over a few ships, like that on the coast of Holland, that gives the least support or relief to a paper system. On the news of this victory arriving in England, the funds did not rise a farthing. The government rejoiced, but its creditors were silent.

It is difficult to find a motive, except in folly and madness, for the conduct of the English government. Every calculation and

* It was stipulated in the treaty of commerce between France and England, concluded at Paris, that the sending away an ambassador by either party, should be taken as an act of hostility by the other party. The declaration of war (Feb. 1793) by the Convention, of which I was then a member, and know well the case, was made in exact conformity to this article in the treaty; for it was not a declaration of war against England, but a declaration that the French republic is in war with England; the first act of hostility having been committed by England. The declaration was made immediately on Chauvelin's return to France, and in consequence of it. Mr. Pitt should inform himself of things better than he does, before he prates so much about them, or of the sending away of Malmesbury, who was only on a visit of permission.

prediction of Mr. Pitt has turned out directly the contrary ; yet still he predicts. He predicted, with all the solemn assurance of a magician, that France would be a bankrupt in a few months. He was right as to the thing, but wrong as to the place, for the bankruptcy happened in England whilst the words were yet warm upon his lips. To find out what will happen, it is only necessary to know what Mr. Pitt predicts. He is a true prophet if taken in the reverse.

Such is the ruinous condition that England is now in, that great as the difficulties of war are to the people, the difficulties that would accompany peace, are equally as great to the government. Whilst the war continues, Mr. Pitt has a pretence for shutting up the bank. But as that pretence could last no longer than the war lasted, he dreads the peace that would expose the absolute bankruptcy of the government, and unveil to a deceived nation, the ruinous effect of his measures. Peace would be a day of accounts to him, and he shuns it as an insolvent debtor shuns a meeting of his creditors. War furnishes him with many pretences ; peace would furnish him with none ; and he stands alarmed at its consequences. His conduct in the negociation at Lille can be easily interpreted. It is not for the sake of the nation that he asks to retain some of the taken islands ; for what are islands to a nation that has already too many for her own good, or what are they in comparison to the expense of another campaign in the present depreciating state of the English funds, and even then those islands must be restored ? No, it is not for the sake of the nation that he asks. It is for the sake of himself. It is as if he said to France, give me some pretence ; cover me from disgrace when my day of reckoning comes.

Any person acquainted with the English government knows, that every minister has some dread on, what is called in England, the winding up of accounts at the end of a war ; that is, the final settlement of all expenses incurred by the war ; and no minister had ever so great cause of dread as Mr. Pitt. A burnt child dreads the fire, and Pitt has had some experience upon this case. The winding up of accounts at the end of the American war was so great, that, though he was not the cause of it, and came into the ministry with great popularity, he lost it all by undertaking, what was impossible for him to avoid, the voluminous business of the winding up. If such was the case in settling the winding up

accounts of his predecessor, how much more has he to apprehend when the accounts to be settled are his own. All men in bad circumstances hate the settlement of accounts, and Pitt, as a minister, is of that description.

But let us take a view of things on a larger ground than the case of a minister. It will then be found, that England, on a comparison of strength with France, when both nations are disposed to exert their utmost, has no possible chance of success. The efforts that England made within the last century, were not generated on the ground of *natural ability*, but of *artificial anticipations*. She ran posterity into debt, and swallowed up in one generation the resources of several generations yet to come, till the project can be pursued no longer. It is otherwise in France. The vastness of her territory and her population, render the burden easy that would make a bankrupt of a country like England.

It is not the weight of a thing, but the numbers who are to bear that weight, that makes it feel light or heavy to the shoulders of those who bear it. A land-tax of half as much in the pound as the land-tax is in England, will raise nearly four times as much revenue in France as is raised in England. This is a scale easily understood, by which all the other sections of productive revenue can be measured. Judge then of the difference of natural ability.

England is strong in a navy ; but that navy costs about eight millions sterling a-year, and is one of the causes that has hastened her bankruptcy. The history of navy bills sufficiently proves this. But strong as England is in this case, the fate of navies must finally be decided by the natural ability of each country to carry its navy to the greatest extent ; and France is able to support a navy twice as large as that of England, with less than half the expense per head on the people, which the present navy of England costs.

We all know that a navy cannot be raised as expeditiously as an army. But as the average duration of a navy, taking the decay of time, storms, and all circumstances and accidents together, is less than twenty years, every navy must be renewed within that time ; and France at the end of a few years, can create and support a navy of double the extent of that of England ; and the conduct of the English government will provoke her to it.

But of what use are navies otherwise than to make or prevent

invasions? Commercially considered, they are losses. They scarcely give any protection to the commerce of the countries which have them, compared with the expense of maintaining them, and they insult the commerce of the nations that are neutral.

During the American war, the plan of the armed neutrality was formed and put in execution: but it was inconvenient, expensive, and ineffectual. This being the case, the problem is, does not commerce contain within itself, the means of its own protection? It certainly does, if the neutral nations will employ that means properly.

Instead then of an *armed neutrality*, the plan should be directly the contrary. It should be an *unarmed neutrality*. In the first place, the rights of neutral nations are easily defined. They are such as are exercised by nations in their intercourse with each other in time of peace, and which ought not, and cannot of right, be interrupted in consequence of war breaking out between any two or more of them.

Taking this as a principle, the next thing is to give it effect. The plan of the armed neutrality was to effect it by threatening war; but an unarmed neutrality can effect it by much easier and more powerful means.

Were the neutral nations to associate, under an honorable injunction of fidelity to each other, and publicly declare to the world, that if any belligerent power shall seize or molest any ship or vessel belonging to the citizens or subjects of any of the powers composing that association, that the whole association will shut its ports against the flag of the offending nation, and will not permit any goods, wares, or merchandize, produced or manufactured in the offending nation, or appertaining thereto, to be imported into any of the ports included in the association, until reparation be made to the injured party; the reparation to be three times the value of the vessel and cargo; and moreover that all remittances in money, goods, and bills of exchange, do cease to be made to the offending nation, until the said reparation be made. Were the neutral nations only to do this, which it is their direct interest to do, England, as a nation depending on the commerce of neutral nations in time of war, dare not molest them, and France would not. But whilst, from the want of a common system, they individually permit England to do it, be-

cause individually they cannot resist it, they put France under the necessity of doing the same thing. The supreme of all laws, in all cases, is that of self preservation.

As the commerce of neutral nations would thus be protected by the means that commerce naturally contains within itself, all the naval operations of France and England would be confined within the circle of acting against each other : and in that case it needs no spirit of prophecy to discover that France must finally prevail. The sooner this be done, the better will it be for both nations, and for all the world.

THOMAS PAINE.

TO THE COUNCIL OF FIVE HUNDRED.

CITIZENS REPRESENTATIVES,

THOUGH it is not convenient to me, in the present situation of my affairs, to subscribe to the loan towards the descent upon England, my economy permits me to make a small patriotic donation. I send an hundred livres, and with it all the wishes of my heart for the success of the descent, and a voluntary offer of any service I can render to promote it.

There will be no lasting peace for France, nor for the world, until the tyranny and corruption of the English government be abolished, and England, like Italy, become a sister republic. As to those men, whether in England, Scotland, or Ireland, who, like Robespierre in France, are covered with crimes, they, like him, have no other resource than in committing more ; but the mass of the people are friends to liberty ; tyranny and taxation oppress them, but they merit to be free.

Accept, Citizens Representatives, the congratulations of an ancient colleague in the dangers we have passed, and on the happy prospect before us.

Safety and respect,

THOMAS PAINE.

TO MR. SECRETARY DUNDAS.

LETTER THE SECOND.

Calais, Sept. 15, 1792.

SIR,

I CONCEIVE it necessary to make you acquainted with the following circumstance :—The department of Calais having elected me a member of the National Convention of France, I set off from London the 13th instant, in company with Mr. Frost, of Spring Garden, and Mr. Audibert, one of the municipal officers of Calais, who brought me the certificate of my being elected. We had not arrived more, I believe, than five minutes at the York Hotel, at Dover, when the train of circumstances began that I am going to relate. We had taken our baggage out of the carriage, and put it into a room, into which we went. Mr. Frost, having occasion to go out, was stopped in the passage by a gentleman, who told him he must return into the room, which he did, and the gentleman came in with him, and shut the door; I had remained in the room. Mr. Audibert was gone to inquire when the packet was to sail. The gentleman then said, that he was collector of the customs, and had an information against us, and must examine our baggage for prohibited articles. He produced his commission as collector. Mr. Frost demanded to see the information, which the collector refused to show, and continued to refuse on every demand that we made. The collector then called in several other officers, and began first to search our pockets. He took from Mr. Audibert, who was then returned into the room, every thing he found in his pocket, and laid it on the table. He then searched Mr. Frost in the same manner, (who, among other things, had the keys of the trunks in his pocket,) and then did the same by me. Mr. Frost wanting to go out, men-

tioned it, and was going towards the door; on which the collector placed himself against the door, and said, nobody should depart the room. After the keys had been taken from Mr. Frost, (for I had given him the keys of my trunks beforehand, for the purpose of his attending the baggage to the customs, if it should be necessary,) the collector asked us to open the trunks, presenting us the keys for that purpose; this we declined to do, unless he would produce his information, which he again refused. The collector then opened the trunks himself, and took out every paper and letter, sealed or unsealed. On our remonstrating with him on the bad policy, as well as the illegality of custom-house officers seizing papers and letters, which were things that did not come under their cognizance, he replied, that the *proclamation* gave him the authority.

Among the letters which he took out of my trunk, were two sealed letters, given into my charge by the American minister in London, one of which was directed to the American minister at Paris, the other to a private gentleman; a letter from the president of the United States, and a letter from the secretary of state in America, both directed to me, and which I had received from the American minister, now in London, and were private letters of friendship; a letter from the electoral body of the department of Calais, containing the notification of my being elected to the National Convention; and a letter from the president of the National Assembly, informing me of my being also elected for the department of the Oise.

As we found that all remonstrances with the collector, on the bad policy and illegality of seizing papers and letters, and retaining our persons by force, under the pretence of searching for prohibited articles, were vain, (for he justified himself on the proclamation, and on the information which he refused to show,) we contented ourselves with assuring him, that what he was then doing, he would afterwards have to answer for, and left it to himself to do as he pleased.

It appeared to us that the collector was acting under the direction of some other person or persons, then in the hotel, but whom he did not choose we should see, or who did not choose to be seen by us; for the collector went several times

out of the room for a few minutes, and was also called out several times.

When the collector had taken what papers and letters he pleased out of the trunks, he proceeded to read them. The first letter he took up for this purpose was that from the president of the United States to me. While he was doing this, I said, that it was very extraordinary that General Washington could not write a letter of private friendship to me, without its being subject to be read by a custom-house officer. Upon this Mr. Frost laid his hand over the face of the letter, and told the collector that he should not read it, and took it from him. Mr. Frost then, casting his eyes on the concluding paragraph of the letter, said, I will read this part to you, which he did; of which the following is an exact transcript—"And as no one can see a greater interest in the happiness of mankind than I do, it is the first wish of my heart, that the enlightened policy of the present age may diffuse to all men those blessings to which they are entitled, and lay the foundation of happiness to future generations."

As all the other letters and papers lay then on the table, the collector took them up, and was going out of the room with them. During the transactions already stated, I contented myself with observing what passed, and spoke but little; but on seeing the collector going out of the room with the letters, I told him that the papers and letters then in his hand, were either belonging to me, or entrusted to my charge, and that as I could not permit them to be out of my sight, I must insist on going with him.

The collector then made a list of the letters and papers, and went out of the room, giving the letters and papers into the charge of one of the officers. He returned in a short time, and, after some trifling conversation, chiefly about the proclamation, told us, that he saw *the proclamation was ill-founded*, and asked if we chose to put the letters and papers into the trunks ourselves, which, as we had not taken them out, we declined doing, and he did it himself, and returned us the keys.

In stating to you these matters, I make no complaint against the personal conduct of the collector, or of any of the officers.

Their manner was as civil as such an extraordinary piece of business could admit of.

My chief motive in writing to you on this subject is, that you may take the measures for preventing the like in future, not only as it concerns private individuals, but in order to prevent a renewal of those unpleasant consequences that have heretofore arisen between nations from circumstances equally as insignificant. I mention this only for myself; but as the interruption extended to two other gentlemen, it is probable that they, as individuals, will take some more effectual mode for redress.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.

THOMAS PAINE.

P. S. Among the papers seized, was a copy of the attorney-general's information against me for publishing the *Rights of Man*, and a printed proof copy of my Letter to the Addressers, which will soon be published.

TO THE
SHERIFF OF THE COUNTY OF SUSSEX,

OR,

THE GENTLEMAN WHO SHALL PRESIDE AT THE
MEETING TO BE HELD AT LEWES, JULY 4.

London, June 30, 1792.

SIR,

I HAVE seen in the Lewes newspapers, of June 25, an advertisement, signed by sundry persons, and also by the sheriff, for holding a meeting at the Town-hall of Lewes, for the purpose, as the advertisement states, of presenting an address on the late proclamation for suppressing writings, books, &c. And as I conceive that a certain publication of mine, entitled "Rights of Man," in which, among other things, the enormous increase of taxes, placemen, and pensioners, is shown to be unnecessary and oppressive, *is the particular writing alluded to in the said publication*; I request the sheriff, or in his absence, whoever shall preside at the meeting, or any other person, to read this letter publicly to the company who shall assemble in consequence of that advertisement.

GENTLEMEN—It is now upwards of eighteen years since I was a resident inhabitant of the town of Lewes. My situation among you, as an officer of the revenue, for more than six years, enabled me to see into the numerous and various distresses which the weight of taxes even at that time of day occasioned; and feeling, as I then did, and as it is natural for me to do, for the hard condition of others, it is with pleasure I can declare, and every person then under my survey, and now living, can witness the exceeding candor, and even tenderness, with which that part of the duty that fell to my share was exe-

cuted. The name of *Thomas Paine* is not to be found in the records of the Lewes' justices, in any one act of contention with, or severity of any kind whatever, towards the persons whom he surveyed, either in the town, or in the country; of this, *Mr. Fuller* and *Mr. Shelley*, who will probably attend the meeting, can, if they please, give full testimony. It is, however, not in their power to contradict it.

Having thus indulged myself in recollecting a place where I formerly had, and even now have, many friends, rich and poor, and most probably some enemies, I proceed to the more important purport of my letter.

Since my departure from Lewes, fortune or providence has thrown me into a line of action, which my first setting out into life could not possibly have suggested to me.

I have seen the fine and fertile country of America ravaged and deluged in blood, and the taxes of England enormously increased and multiplied in consequence thereof; and this, in a great measure, by the instigation of the same class of placemen, pensioners, and court dependants, who are now promoting addresses throughout England, on the present *unintelligible* proclamation.

I have also seen a system of government rise up in that country, free from corruption, and now administered over an extent of territory ten times as large as England, *for less expense than the pensions alone in England amount to*; and under which more freedom is enjoyed, and a more happy state of society is preserved, and a more general prosperity is promoted, than under any other system of government now existing in the world. Knowing, as I do, the things I now declare, I should reproach myself with want of duty and affection to mankind, were I not in the most undismayed manner to publish them, as it were, on the house-tops, for the good of others.

Having thus glanced at what has passed within my knowledge, since my leaving Lewes, I come to the subject more immediately before the meeting now present.

Mr. Edmund Burke, who, as I shall show, in a future publication, has lived a concealed pensioner, at the expense of the public of fifteen hundred pounds per annum, for about ten years last past, published a book the winter before last, in open

violation of the principles of liberty, and for which he was applauded by that class of men *who are now promoting addresses*. Soon after his book appeared, I published the first part of the work, entitled "*Rights of Man*," as an answer thereto, and had the happiness of receiving the public thanks of several bodies of men, and of numerous individuals of the best character, of every denomination in religion, and of every rank of life—placemen and pensioners excepted.

In February last, I published the second part of "*Rights of Man*," and as it met with still greater approbation from the true friends of national freedom, and went deeper into the system of government, and exposed the abuses of it, more than had been done in the first part, it consequently excited an alarm among all those, who, insensible of the burthen of taxes, which the general mass of the people sustain, are living in luxury and indolence, and hunting after court preferments, sinecure places, and pensions, either for themselves, or for their family connexions.

I have shown in that work, that the taxes may be reduced at least *six millions*, and even then, the expenses of government in England, would be twenty times greater than they are in the country I have already spoken of. That taxes may be entirely taken off from the poor, by remitting to them in money at the rate of between *three and four pounds* per head per annum, for the education and bringing up of the children of the poor families, who are computed at one third of the whole nation, and *six pounds* per annum to all poor persons, decayed tradesmen, or others, from the age of fifty until sixty, and *ten pounds* per annum from after sixty. And that in consequence of this allowance, to be paid out of the surplus taxes, the poor rates would become unnecessary, and that it is better to apply the surplus taxes to these beneficent purposes, *than to waste them on idle and profligate courtiers, placemen, and pensioners*.

These, gentlemen, are a part of the plans and principles contained in the work, which this meeting is now called upon, in an indirect manner, to vote an address against, and brand with the name of *wicked* and *seditionous*. But that the work may speak for itself, I request leave to close this part of my letter with an extract therefrom, in the following words:

“By the operation of this plan, the poor-laws, those instruments of civil torture, will be superseded, and the wasteful expense of litigation prevented. The hearts of the humane will not be shocked by ragged and hungry children, and persons of seventy and eighty years of age, begging for bread. The dying poor will not be dragged from place to place to breathe their last, as a reprisal of parish upon parish. Widows will have a maintenance for their children, and not be carted away, on the death of their husbands, like culprits and criminals; and children will no longer be considered as increasing the distresses of their parents. The haunts of the wretched will be known, because it will be to their advantage, and the number of petty crimes, the offspring of poverty and distress, will be lessened. The poor, as well as the rich, will then be interested in the support of government, and the cause and apprehensions of riots and tumults will cease. Ye who sit in ease, and solace yourselves in plenty, and such there are in Turkey and Russia, as well as in England, and who say to yourselves, *are we not well off?* Have ye thought of these things? When ye do, ye will cease to speak and feel for yourselves alone.”—*Rights of Man*, Part II. p. 98.

Gentlemen, I have now stated to you such matters as appear necessary to me to offer to the consideration of the meeting. I have no other interest in what I am doing, nor in writing you this letter, than the interest of the *heart*. I consider the proposed address as calculated to give countenance to placemen, pensioners, enormous taxation, and corruption. Many of you will recollect, that whilst I resided among you, there was not a man more firm and open in supporting the principles of liberty than myself, and I still pursue, and ever will, the same path.

I have, gentlemen, only one request to make, which is—that those who have called the meeting will speak *out*, and say, whether in the address they are going to present against publications, which the proclamation calls wicked, “they mean the work entitled *Rights of Man*, or whether they do not?”

I am, gentlemen,

With sincere wishes for your happiness,

Your friend and servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

TO SIR ARCHIBALD MACDONALD,
ATTORNEY GENERAL.

LETTER THE FIRST.

SIR,

THOUGH I have some reason for believing that you were not the original promoter or encourager of the prosecution commenced against the work entitled "*Rights of Man*," either as that prosecution is intended to affect the author, the publisher, or the public; yet as you appear the official person therein, I address this letter to you, not as Sir Archibald Macdonald, but as Attorney General.

You began by a prosecution against the publisher, Jordan, and the reason assigned by Mr. Secretary Dundas, in the House of Commons, in the debate on the proclamation, May 25, for taking that measure, was, he said, because Mr. Paine could not be found, or words to that effect. Mr. Paine, sir, so far from secreting himself, never went a step out of his way, nor in the least instance varied from his usual conduct, to avoid any measure you might choose to adopt with respect to him. It is on the purity of his heart, and the universal utility of the principles and plans which his writings contain, that he rests the issue; and he will not dishonour it by any kind of subterfuge. The apartments which he occupied at the time of writing the work last winter, he has continued to occupy to the present hour, and the solicitors of the prosecution knew where to find him; of which there is a proof in their own office, as far back as the 21st of May, and also in the office of my own attorney.

But admitting, for the sake of the case, that the reason for proceeding against the publisher was, as Mr. Dundas stated, that Mr. Paine could not be found, that reason can now exist no longer.

The instant that I was informed that an information was preparing to be filed against me, as the author of, I believe, one of the most useful and benevolent books ever offered to mankind, I directed my attorney to put in an appearance; and as I shall meet the prosecution fully and fairly, and with a good and upright conscience, I have a right to expect that no act of littleness will be made use of on the part of the prosecution towards influencing the future issue with respect to the author. This expression may, perhaps, appear obscure to you, but I am in the possession of some matters which serve to show that the action against the publisher is not intended to be a *real* action. If, therefore, any persons concerned in the prosecution have found their cause so weak, as to make it appear convenient to them to enter into a negotiation with the publisher, whether for the purpose of his submitting to a verdict, and to make use of the verdict so obtained as a circumstance, by way of precedent, on a future trial against myself; or for any other purpose not fully made known to me; if, I say, I have cause to suspect this to be the case, I shall most certainly withdraw the defence I should otherwise have made, or promoted, on his (the publisher's) behalf, and leave the negotiators to themselves, and shall reserve the whole of the defence for the *real* trial.

But, sir, for the purpose of conducting this matter with at least the appearance of fairness and openness, that shall justify itself before the public, whose cause it really is, (for it is the right of public discussion and investigation that is questioned,) I have to propose to you to cease the prosecution against the publisher; and as the reason or pretext can no longer exist for continuing it against him because Mr. Paine could not be found, that you would direct the whole process against me, with whom the prosecuting party will not find it possible to enter into any private negotiation.

I will do the cause full justice, as well for the sake of the nation, as for my own reputation.

Another reason for discontinuing the process against the publisher is, because it can amount to nothing. First, because a jury in London cannot decide upon the fact of publishing beyond the limits of the jurisdiction of London, and therefore

the work may be republished over and over again in every county in the nation, and every case must have a separate process; and by the time that three or four hundred prosecutions have been had, the eyes of the nation will then be fully open to see that the work in question contains a plan the best calculated to root out all the abuses of government, and to lessen the taxes of the nation upwards of *six millions annually*.

Secondly, Because though the gentlemen of London may be very expert in understanding their particular professions and occupations, and how to make business contracts with government beneficial to themselves as individuals, the rest of the nation may not be disposed to consider them sufficiently qualified nor authorized to determine for the whole nation on plans of reform, and on systems and principles of government. This would be in effect to erect a jury into a national convention, instead of electing a convention, and to lay a precedent for the probable tyranny of juries, under the pretence of supporting their rights.

That the possibility always exists of packing juries will not be denied; and, therefore, in all cases, where government is the prosecutor, more especially in those where the right of public discussion and investigation of principles and systems of government is attempted to be suppressed by a verdict, or in those where the object of the work that is prosecuted is the reform of abuse and the abolition of sinecure places and pensions, in all these cases the verdict of a jury will itself become a subject of discussion; and therefore, it furnishes an additional reason for discontinuing the prosecution against the publisher, more especially as it is not a secret that there has been a negotiation with him for secret purposes, and for proceeding against me only. I shall make a much stronger defence than what I believe the Treasury Solicitor's agreement with him will permit him to do.

I believe that Mr. Burke, finding himself defeated, and not being able to make any answer to the *Rights of Man*, has been one of the promoters of this prosecution; and I shall return the compliment to him by showing, in a future publica-

tion, that he has been a masked pensioner at 1500*l.* per annum for about ten years.

Thus it is that the public money is wasted, and the dread of public investigation is produced.

I am, sir,

Your obedient humble servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

TO THE ATTORNEY GENERAL,
ON THE
PROSECUTION AGAINST THE SECOND PART OF
RIGHTS OF MAN.

LETTER THE SECOND.

Paris, Nov., 11th year of the Republic.

SIR,

As there can be no personal resentment between two strangers, I write this letter to you, as a man against whom I have no animosity.

You have, as Attorney General, commenced a prosecution against me, as the author of *Rights of Man*. Had not my duty, in consequence of my being elected a member of the National Convention of France, called me from England, I should have staid to have contested the injustice of that prosecution; not upon my own account, for I cared not about the prosecution, but to have defended the principles I had advanced in the work.

The duty I am now engaged in is of too much importance to permit me to trouble myself about your prosecution: when I have leisure, I shall have no objection to meet you on that ground; but as I now stand, whether you go on with the prosecution, or whether you do not, or whether you obtain a verdict, or not, is a matter of the most perfect indifference to me as an individual. If you obtain one, (which you are welcome to, if you can get it,) it cannot affect me either in person, property, or reputation, otherwise than to increase the latter; and with respect to yourself, it is as consistent that you obtain a verdict against the man in the moon as against me: neither do I see how you can continue the prosecution against me, as you

would have done against one of *your own people* who had absented himself because he was prosecuted: what passed at Dover proves that my departure from England was no secret.

My necessary absence from your country now, in consequence of my duty here, affords the opportunity of knowing whether the prosecution was intended against Thomas Paine, or against the rights of the people of England to investigate systems and principles of government; for as I cannot now be the object of the prosecution, the going on with the prosecution will show that something else was the object, and that something else can be no other than the people of England, for it is against *their rights*, and not against me, that a verdict or sentence can operate, if it can operate at all. Be then so candid as to tell the jury, (if you choose to continue the process,) whom it is you are prosecuting, and on whom it is that the verdict is to fall.

But I have other reasons than those I have mentioned for writing you this letter; and, however you may choose to interpret them, they proceed from a good heart. The time, sir, is becoming too serious to play with court prosecutions, and sport with national rights. The terrible examples that have taken place here, upon men who less than a year ago thought themselves as secure as any prosecuting judge, jury, or attorney general, can now do in England, ought to have some weight with men in your situation. That the government of England is as great, if not the greatest, perfection of fraud and corruption that ever took place since governments began, is what you cannot be a stranger to, unless the constant habit of seeing it has blinded your senses; but though you may not choose to see it, the people are seeing it very fast, and the progress is beyond what you may choose to believe. Is it possible that you, or I, can believe, or that reason can make any other man believe, that the capacity of such a man as Mr. Guelph, or any of his profligate sons, is necessary to the government of a nation? I speak to you as one man ought to speak to another; and I know also, that I speak what other people are beginning to think.

That you cannot obtain a verdict (and if you do, it will signify nothing) without packing a jury, (and we both know that

such tricks are practised,) is what I have very good reason to believe. I have gone into coffee-houses, and places where I was unknown, on purpose to learn the currency of opinion, and I never yet saw any company of twelve men that condemned the book; but I have often found a greater number than twelve approving it, and this I think is a fair way of collecting the natural currency of opinion. Do not then, sir, be the instrument of drawing twelve men into a situation that may be injurious to them afterwards. I do not speak this from policy, but from benevolence; but if you choose to go on with the process, I make it my request to you that you will read this letter in court, after which the judge and the jury may do as they please. As I do not consider myself the object of the prosecution, neither can I be affected by the issue, one way or the other, I shall, though a foreigner in your country, subscribe as much money as any other man towards supporting the right of the nation against the prosecution; and it is for this purpose only that I shall do it.

THOMAS PAINE.

As I have not time to copy letters, you will excuse the corrections.

P. S. I intended, had I staid in England, to have published the information, with my remarks upon it, before the trial came on; but as I am otherwise engaged, I reserve myself till the trial is over, when I shall reply fully to every thing you shall advance.

ON THE PROPRIETY OF BRINGING LOUIS XVI. TO TRIAL.

Paris, Nov. 20, 1793

CITIZEN PRESIDENT,

As I do not know precisely what day the Convention will resume the discussion on the trial of Louis XVI., and, on account of my inability to express myself in French, I cannot speak at the tribune, I request permission to deposit in your hands the enclosed paper, which contains my opinion on that subject. I adopt this step with so much more eagerness, because circumstances will prove to what a degree it interests France, that Louis XVI. should continue to enjoy good health. I should be happy if the Convention would have the goodness to hear this paper read this morning, as I propose sending a copy of it to London, to be printed in the English journals.

A Secretary read the opinion of Thomas Paine.

I think that Louis XVI. ought to be tried; not that this advice is suggested by a spirit of vengeance, but because this measure appears to me just, lawful, and conformable to sound policy. If Louis XVI. is innocent, let us put him to prove his innocence; if he is guilty, let the national will determine if he should be pardoned or punished; but besides the motives which personally interest Louis XVI., there are others which make his trial necessary. I am about to develop these motives, in the language which suits them, and no other. I forbid myself the use of equivocal expression or of mere ceremony. There was formed among the crowned ruffians of Europe a conspiracy, which threatened not only French liberty, but likewise that of all nations. Every thing tends to make it be believed, that Louis XVI. was the partner of that horde of conspirators.

You have this man in your power, and he is at present the only one of the band of whom we can make sure. I consider Louis XVI. in the same point of view as the two first robbers taken up in the affair of the jewel office, their trial enabled you to discover the gang to which they belonged. We have seen the unhappy soldiers of Austria and Prussia, and the other powers which declared themselves our enemies, torn from their fire-sides, and drawn to carnage as the vilest of animals, to sustain, at the price of their blood, the common cause of crowned robbers. They loaded the inhabitants of those regions with taxes to support the expenses of the war. All this was not done solely for Louis XVI. Some of the conspirators have acted openly: but there is reason to presume, that this conspiracy is composed of two classes of robbers; those who have taken up arms, and those who have lent to their cause secret encouragement and clandestine assistance: and it is indispensable to let France and all Europe know all these accomplices.

A little time after the National Convention was constituted, the minister for foreign affairs presented the picture of all the governments of Europe, as well of those whose hostilities were public, as of those who acted with a mysterious circumspection. We have already penetrated into some part of the conduct of Mr. Guelph, Elector of Hanover, and violent presumptions affect the same man, his court and ministers, in quality of king of England.

M. Calonne has constantly been favoured with a friendly reception at that court. The arrival of Mr. Smith, secretary to Mr. Pitt, at Coblenz, when the emigrants were assembling there; the recal of the English ambassador; the extravagant joy manifested by the court of St. James' at the false report of the defeat of Dumourier, when it caused it to be communicated by Lord Elgin, then minister of Great Britain at Brussels—all these circumstances render him extremely suspicious; the trial of Louis XVI., will probably furnish more decisive proofs.

The long subsisting fear of a revolution in England, could, I believe, singly, prevent that court from manifesting as much publicity in its operation as Austria and Prussia. Another reason could be added to this; the consequential decrease of

credit, by means of which alone all the ancient governments could obtain fresh loans; for in proportion as the probability of a revolution increased, whoever should furnish towards the new loans must expect to lose his stock.

Every body knows that the Landgrave of Hesse fights only as far as he is paid: he has been for several years in the pay of the court of London. If the trial of Louis XVI. could bring it to light, that this detestable dealer in human flesh has been paid out of the produce of the taxes levied on the people of England, it would be but doing justice to that nation, to inform them of that fact; it would at the same time give to France an exact knowledge of the character of that court, which has not ceased to be the most intriguing, ever since its connexion with Germany.

Louis XVI., considered as an individual, is an object beneath the notice of the republic; but when he is looked upon as a part of that band of conspirators, as a criminal whose trial may lead all the nations in the world to a knowledge and detestation of the disastrous system of monarchy, and the plots and intrigues of their own courts, he ought to be, and must be tried.

If the crimes for which Louis XVI. is arraigned, were absolutely personal to him, without reference to general conspiracies, and confined to the affairs of France, the motives of inviolability, that folly of the moment, might have been urged in his behalf with some appearance of reason; but as he is arraigned not only on the part of France, but for having conspired against all Europe, we ought to use every means in our power to discover the whole extent of that conspiracy. France is now a republic: she has completed her revolution; but she cannot earn all the advantages arising from it, as long as she is environed with despotical governments; their armies and marine oblige her likewise to keep troops and ships in readiness. It is, therefore, her immediate interest, that all nations be as free as herself; that revolutions be universal; and since Louis XVI. can serve to prove, by the flagitiousness of government in general, the necessity of revolutions, she ought not to let slip so precious an opportunity.

The despots of Europe have formed alliances to preserve

their respective authority, and to perpetuate the oppression of nations; this is the end which they proposed to themselves, in making an invasion on the French territory. They dread the effect of the French revolution in the bosom of their own countries; and in hopes of preventing it, they are come to try to destroy that revolution, before it should have attained its perfect maturity. Their attempt has not been attended with success: France has already vanquished their armies; but it is left to her to sound the particulars of the conspiracy, to discover, to expose to the eyes of the universe, those despots who had the infamy to take part in it; and the universe expects of her that act of justice.

These are my motives for demanding that Louis XVI. be judged; and it is in this sole point of view, that his trial appears to me of sufficient importance to attract the attention of the republic.

As to what regards inviolability, I would not have such a motive to be mentioned. Seeing no longer in Louis XVI. but a weak-minded and narrow-spirited individual, ill-bred, like all his colleagues, given, as it is said, to frequent excesses of drunkenness, and whom the National Assembly raised again imprudently on a throne which was not made for him, if we show him hereafter some pity, it shall not be the result of the burlesque idea of a pretended inviolability.

THOMAS PAINE.

SPEECH IN THE NATIONAL CONVENTION,

ON THE QUESTION,

“SHALL, OR SHALL NOT, A RESPITE OF THE SENTENCE
OF LOUIS XVI. TAKE PLACE?”

I HAVE voted for the detention of Louis, and his banishment after the war, but I am much afraid that the speedy execution of the sentence of Louis will rather pass for a deed of vengeance than a measure of justice. I wish the Convention had voted as the nation would ; I mean for imprisonment.

The United States of America have the utmost veneration for Louis, who gave them liberty. And I can pledge myself to you, that the sentence of Louis will overwhelm all the Americans with consternation. And remember, that it is they who will alone supply you with all the timber and naval stores you shall want in the maritime war you are about to declare. The north of Europe is ready to bring its forces against you. You mean to send an ambassador to Philadelphia ; my sincere wish is, that he may announce to the Americans, that the National Convention of France, from pure friendship to America, has consented to respite the sentence of Louis.

Citizens, let not a neighbouring despot enjoy the satisfaction of seeing that man mount the scaffold, who has broke the irons of the Americans.

ON LOUISIANA, AND EMISSARIES.

THE latest news from New-Orleans, in a letter from Major Claiborne, dated New-Orleans, August 29th, says, "It is now within a few minutes of the time when letters must go to the Post-office. I have waited to give you some information from Natchitoches, in case any should arrive, but no dispatches are received from Governor Claiborne, *nor do we hear any thing more of (the Spanish) Governor Taxos and his nine hundred men.*

"The city of New-Orleans is in perfect tranquillity, and the inhabitants thereof, and of the country, (Louisiana) continue to enjoy good health."

Carpenter's emissary paper asserted a few days ago, that terrible discontents existed in Louisiana, and that Buonaparte would avail himself thereof, and seize upon that country. The man who asserts and circulates false reports ought to be prosecuted. The press is free for the discussion of principle, but not for lying.

Pierpoint Edwards has taken the liars and alarmists of Connecticut in hand, and I hope he will not let those of New-York escape.

We have in all our cities and sea ports, a considerable number of men, chiefly dry good merchants, who are parties or agents of British merchants; these men want to embroil us with France and Spain, and there is no lying they will stick at to promote it; but they had better pack themselves off, for if Buonaparte should come, as they predict, and ought to be afraid of, he will trim their jackets, and make them pay the expense; and as to Carpenter, his nose will go to the grindstone. But the fellow, if caught, will turn informer, and impeach his employers. "Here," he will say, "is my list of subscribers, fall on them. I will show you where they live, and where their property is."

The continual abuse and blackguardism in Carpenter's paper

against France and Spain ought not to be permitted. If he must do it, let him go back to his own country and do it. France has always behaved with honour to the United States, and we are perfectly easy on that score. It was by her aid we drove off the British invaders in the revolutionary war, and if she has a mind to come and drive off the scoundrels and British emissaries that seek to embroil the United States and France with each other, we will not fortify New-York to prevent it. Let those pay the expense of fortifying who expose it to danger. The cheapest way to fortify New-York, will be to banish the scoundrels that infest it. When we are a peaceable people, and mind our own business, and let other nations and governments alone, we shall not stand in need of fortifications ; but when we give protection and encouragement to foreign emissaries, we must expect trouble.

It is but a little time since the British ministry sent several of its emissaries to some of the states of Germany, to carry on conspiracies against France, and when the French government found it out, they sent an armed force and seized those emissaries. Two of the English ministers resident at those German states had to fly the country. The English minister, Drake, who was at Munich, was one of them. It is not because New-York is more remote from France than those states were, that conspiracies can be carried on with greater safety, or ought to be permitted. Two or three thousand French troops would soon scour New-York, and carry off a cargo of conspirators. The Feds who encourage Carpenter (this emissary's name is Cullen) are cutting their own throats.

This man, Carpenter, for this is the name he goes by at present, is now a professed British emissary. He has been running over the world in quest of adventures, and he has taken up his residence at New-York, to carry on his treason against the peace of the United States. In the height of his folly, madness, and ignorance, he has proposed in two or three of his late papers, (beginning with that of Oct. 6th,) that the United States should join England in a war against France and Spain, and enter into an alliance with her. A man never turns a rogue but he turns a fool, and this is always the case with emissaries.

Does not this foolish fellow see that all those powers on the continent of Europe that formed alliances with England have been ruined ? The late coalition against France consisted of five hundred thousand men, exclusive of England, and every one of the powers concerned in that coalition has had to repent it. The Emperor of Germany is dismissed from his rank as emperor. The Emperor of Russia has been beaten into humiliation and peace. The dominions of the house of Austria have been reduced to a narrow compass, and the remaining part obliged to pay tribute. The King of Naples has lost his dominions. The Elector of Hanover has lost his electorate.

These are the fruits of forming alliances with England ; yet with all these examples of ruin staring us in the face, this emissary of corruption, Carpenter, or Cullen, or whatever his travelling name may be, wants the United States to run their head into the fiery furnace of a war on the part of England. This emissary had better pack himself off, for we have those among us who know him.

THOMAS PAINE.

Oct. 11, 1806.

A CHALLENGE TO THE FEDERALISTS TO DECLARE THEIR PRINCIPLES.

THE old names of *Whig* and *Tory* have given place to the later names of *Republicans* and *Federalists*; by contraction *Feds*. The word *Republican* contains some meaning, though not very positive, except that it is the opposite of monarchy; but the word *Federalist* contains none. It is merely a name without a meaning. It may apply to a gang of thieves federalized to commit robbery, or to any other kind of association. When men form themselves into political parties, it is customary with them to make a declaration of their principles. But the *Feds* do not declare what their principles are; from which we may infer, that either they have no principles, and are mere *snarlers*, or that their principles are too bad to be told. Their object, however, is to get possession of power; and their caution is to conceal the use they will make of it. Such men ought not to be trusted.

The *Republicans*, on the contrary, are open and frank, in declaring their principles, for they are of a nature that requires no concealment. The more they are published and understood, the more they are approved.

The principles of the *Republicans* are, to support the representative system of government, and to leave it an inheritance to their children; to cultivate peace and civil manners with all nations, as the surest means of avoiding wars, and never to embroil themselves in the wars of other nations, nor in foreign coalitions; to adjust and settle all differences that might arise with foreign nations, by explanation and negotiation in preference to the sword, if it can be done; to have no more taxes than are necessary for the decent support of government; to pay every man for his service, and to have no more servants than are wanted.

The Republicans hold, as a fixed incontrovertible principle, that sovereignty resides in the great mass of the people, and that the persons they elect are the representatives of that sovereignty itself. They know of no such thing as hereditary government, or of men born to govern them; for, besides the injustice of it, it never can be known before they are born whether they will be wise men or fools.

The Republicans now challenge the Federalists to declare their principles. But as the Federalists have never yet done this, and most probably never will, we have a right to infer what their principles are from the conduct they have exhibited.

The Federalists opposed the suppression of the internal taxes laid on in the stupid, expensive, and unprincipled administration of John Adams; though it was at that time evident, and experience has since confirmed it for a fact, that those taxes answered no other purpose than to make offices for the maintenance of a number of their dependents at the expense of the public. From this conduct of theirs we infer, that could the Federalists get again into power, they would again load the country with internal taxes.

The Federalists, while in power, proposed and voted for a standing army, and in order to induce the country to consent to a measure so unpopular in itself, they raised and circulated the fabricated falsehood that France was going to send an army to invade the United States; and to prevent being detected in this lie, and to keep the country in ignorance, they passed a law to prohibit all commerce and intercourse with France. As the pretence for which a standing army was to be raised had no existence, not even in their own brain, for it was a wilful lie, we have a right to infer, that the object of the Federal faction in raising that army, was to overthrow the representative system of government, and to establish a government of war and taxes on the corrupt principles of the English government; and that, could they get again into power, they would again attempt the same thing.

As to the inconsistencies, contradictions, and falsehoods of the Federal faction, they are too numerous to be counted. When Spain shut up the port of New-Orleans, so as to ex-

clude from it the citizens of the United States, the Federal faction in congress bellowed out for war, and the Federal papers echoed the cry. The faction, both in and out of Congress, declared New-Orleans to be of such vast importance, that without it the western states would be ruined. But mark the change! No sooner was the cession of New-Orleans and the territory of Louisiana obtained by peaceable negotiation, and for many times less expense than a war, with all its uncertainties of success, would have cost, than this self-same faction gave itself the lie, and represented the place as of no value. According to them, it was worth fighting for at a great expense, but not worth having quietly at a comparatively small expense. It has been said of a thief, that he had rather steal a purse than find one, and the conduct of the Federalists on this occasion corresponds with that saying. But all these inconsistencies become understood, when we recollect that the leaders of the Federal faction are an English faction, and that they follow, like a satellite, the variations of their principal. Their continual aim has been and still is, to involve the United States in a war with France and Spain. This is an English scheme, and the papers of the faction give every provocation that words can give, to provoke France to hostilities. The bugbear held up by them is, that Buonaparte will attack Louisiana. This is an invention of the British emissary, Cullen, alias Carpenter, and the association of the Federalists, at least some of them, with this miserable emissary, involves their own characters in suspicion.

The Republicans, as before said, are open, bold, and candid in declaring their principles. They are no skulkers. Let, then, the Federalists declare theirs.

COMMON SENSE.

Oct. 17, 1806.

LIBERTY OF THE PRESS.

The Author of the following paper never writes on principle, without communicating to the public something which, if not new, is told in a new way. The Liberty of the Press is a subject of the first importance. He would gratify me, and I have no doubt render an essential service to the community, by publishing at large his thoughts upon it.—Cheetham, of Oct. 20, 1806.

Of the term Liberty of the Press.

THE writer of this remembers a remark made to him by Mr. Jefferson concerning the English newspapers, which at that time, 1787, while Mr. Jefferson was minister at Paris, were most vulgarly abusive. The remark applies with equal force to the Federal papers of America. The remark was, that “the licentiousness of the press produces the same effect as the restraint of the press was intended to do. If the restraint, said he, was to prevent things being told, and the licentiousness of the press prevents things being believed when they are told.” We have in this state an evidence of the truth of this remark. The number of Federal papers in the city and state of New-York, are more than five to one to the number of Republican papers, yet the majority of the elections go always against the Federal papers, which is demonstrative evidence that the licentiousness of those papers are destitute of credit.

Whoever has made observations on the characters of nations will find it generally true, that the manners of a nation, or of a party, can be better ascertained from the character of its press than from any other public circumstance. If its press is licentious, its manners are not good. Nobody believes a common liar, or a common defamer.

Nothing is more common with printers, especially of newspapers, than the continual cry of the *Liberty of the Press*, as if because they are printers, they are to have more privileges than other people. As the term "*Liberty of the Press*" is adopted in this country without being understood, I will state the origin of it, and show what it means. The term comes from England, and the case was as follows :

Prior to what is in England called *the revolution*, which was in 1688, no work could be published in that country, without first obtaining the permission of an officer appointed by the government for inspecting works intended for publication. The same was the case in France, except that in France there were forty who were called *censors*, and in England there was but one, called *Imprimeur*.

At the revolution, the office of *Imprimeur* was abolished, and as works could then be published without first obtaining the permission of the government officer, the press was, in consequence of that abolition, said to be free, and it was from this circumstance that the term *Liberty of the Press* arose. The press, which is a tongue to the eye, was then put exactly in the case of the human tongue. A man does not ask liberty before hand to say something he has a mind to say, but he becomes answerable afterwards for the atrocities he may utter. In like manner, if a man makes the press utter atrocious things, he becomes as answerable for them as if he had uttered them by word of mouth. Mr. Jefferson has said in his inaugural speech, that "*error of opinion might be tolerated, when reason was left free to combat it.*" This is sound philosophy in cases of error. But there is a difference between error and licentiousness.

Some lawyers in defending their clients, for the generality of lawyers, like Swiss soldiers, will fight on either side, have often given their opinion of what they defined the liberty of the press to be. One said it was this, another said it was that, and so on, according to the case they were pleading. Now these men ought to have known that the term, *liberty of the press*, arose from a fact, the abolition of the office of *Imprimeur*, and that opinion has nothing to do in the case. The term refers to the fact of printing *free from prior restraint*,

and not at all to the matter printed, whether good or bad. The public at large, or in case of prosecution, a jury of the country, will be judges of the matter.

COMMON SENSE.

Oct. 19, 1806.

VOL. II.

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THE EMISSARY CULLEN, OTHERWISE CARPENTER.

IN Cullen's emissary paper, clandestinely entitled "The People's Friend," of October, is a piece signed *Hamilton*, in which several notorious falsifications are made from a publication of mine, entitled *Communication*, in the (New-York) *American Citizen*, of October 11, and the falsifications thus made, are imposed upon the public as literal extracts from that communication.

On Saturday, October 18, I made a written copy of those falsifications, and desired a friend* of mine to call on Cullen, or Carpenter, or whatever his travelling name may be, and read the said falsifications to him, and also a note written by myself, in my own name, asking him if he was the writer of those falsifications, and of the piece signed *Hamilton*, from which I had copied them, or to declare who the writer of them was.

The gentleman who undertook to see Carpenter upon this business, called at his (Carpenter's) printing-office the next day, but could get no intelligence of him. He then left word with the person in the office, that he would call again the next day, Monday, and that he had something to communicate to Mr. Carpenter. The gentleman called accordingly, but Carpenter was not to be found. He left the same message for the next day, Tuesday, and called the third time, but Carpenter was not to be found. He then inquired of the persons in the office, who appeared to belong to it, where Carpenter lived or lodged. They said they did not know, but they believed it was a good way off. They also told him he might leave his message with them; but as the gentleman's business was to see

* Mr. Walter Morton.

Carpenter, and to read a message to him from me, and as he found, after calling three times, that Carpenter kept himself obscured, he came away, and I desired him to call no more.

An emissary is always a skulking character. His business is lying and deceiving. He shuns the public, and is afraid that every inquiry about him is for the purpose of apprehending him.

The publication of mine, entitled *Communication*, in the American Citizen of October 11, which Cullen, or Carpenter, in his paper of October 13, has falsified, was written to impress on the mind of the people of New-York, some apprehension of the danger to which they might expose themselves and the city, by giving protection and encouragement to the emissary of one belligerent nation to the injury of another belligerent nation.

The United States profess to be a neutral nation, and as such she cannot harbour an emissary of either of the belligerent nations. If that emissary be demanded by the party injured, the nation harbouring him must give him up, or take the consequence. Nations do not settle their disputes by lawsuits; for there is no court to try such disputes in. They complain first of some real or supposed injury, and if it is not explained or redressed by the government they complain to, they redress themselves; for nations, with respect to each other, are like individuals in a state of nature. We have no laws respecting emissaries, and therefore emissaries are a sort of *outlaws*, that must take just what fare or fate they meet with. They are not entitled to protection. They violate, like spies, the laws of hospitality, and expose to danger the place that harbours them.

In the piece entitled *Communication*, before spoken of, I stated that the British ministry sent emissaries to some of the States of Germany to carry on conspiracies against France, and that when the French government found it out, they sent an armed force and seized those emissaries, and that two of the English ministers, resident at those German states, had to fly the country. Drake, the English minister at Munich, was one of them. "It is not," said I, "because New-York is more

remote from France than those states were, that conspiracies can be carried on with greater safety, or ought to be permitted. Two or three thousand French troops would soon scour New-York, and *carry off a cargo of conspirators.*" Carpenter, among other falsifications, has falsified this passage, which was a caution against the danger of harbouring him, and *made it into an invitation for two or three thousand French troops to come over and plunder the "merchants."* If Carpenter should be prosecuted and convicted of *lying*, he cannot complain his sentence is hard. But *lying* is so naturally the mother tongue of an emissary, that *truth* is to him like a foreign language. The cases I stated, with respect to emissaries sent by the British ministry to Germany, ought to have put the Federalists of New-York on their guard, for their own safety sake, not to countenance or encourage Carpenter. This was the more necessary for the men calling themselves Federalists to do, because their own political character is very doubtful. They have never declared what their principles are, or for what purpose they are federalized. Their language is abuse instead of argument; and as far as their conduct discovers their motives, for as to principles they have none, their leaders are an English faction, disaffected to the peace of the United States.

Carpenter came to the United States about the same time that Pitt, whose meanness was equal to his ignorance, sent his emissaries into Germany. Carpenter is the successor of Porcupine; he is his equal in blackguardism but not in wit. The one had talents, the other is a fool that has not talents enough to be a knave. I am not entering into a contest with this emissary. I am exposing him, and putting the Federalists, or rather those who have been deceived by that faction, on their guard against him, and having done so, *I leave them.* The Republicans have nothing to fear. They are not the abettors of conspiracies against a friendly power.

THOMAS PAINE.

Oct. 28, 1806.

COMMUNICATION ON CULLEN.

As it happens that Duane, the editor of the Philadelphia Aurora, knows the emissary Cullen, who goes by the name of Carpenter, and is the editor of a paper in New-York, which, emissary like, he calls the *People's Friend*, I send you some extracts from the Aurora of October 28, respecting this emissary. The extracts are as follows:—

“Two of the Anglo-Federal editors of New-York have fallen upon their new associate, Cullen, (who calls himself Carpenter.) Cullen has *let out* his English agency too openly, and Coleman tells him so—he does not blame Cullen for wishing or endeavouring to promote an alliance, offensive and defensive, with England, but for letting the thing out so openly, and thereby opposing the feelings and interests of the country, the worst effect of which he considers to be the ruin of the Anglo-Federal party. The New-York Commercial Advertiser is also very hard on Cullen's English devotion, and fairly takes the ground in opposition to this English emissary. Cullen feels it, and comes forth in an inflated palaver. He says, that his departure from England was owing to a *miscarriage*, but what kind of a miscarriage he has not said.

“Cullen roars out lustily about his personal deportment, of which he knows the editor of this paper (the Aurora) could give a very humorous account, if he were disposed to indulge in private anecdote.

“Perhaps the city of Calcutta never exhibited so dirty and debauched a character as this now delicate Mr. Cullen, alias Carpenter. This Cullen, with whom the writer of this article (Duane) never held intercourse in India, but whom he frequently saw and pitied in the condition hinted at, addressed himself to the editor of this paper (the Aurora) in the gallery of the English House of Commons, in the winter of 1795, the

editor of this paper (the Aurora) being then a reporter for a spirited paper called the Telegraph. A gentleman who also reported for one of the public prints, seeing this Cullen in conversation with the present editor of this paper, (the Aurora,) gave the following friendly hint. 'Do you know that man Cullen?' I never had any personal acquaintance with him; I have seen him, and heard much about him, in Calcutta. 'Let me tell you, (replied the gentleman,) that if you cultivate that man's acquaintance, you must relinquish your present acquaintance, for none of the respectable writers for the public papers will associate with him.' The hint was not at all necessary; and the whole of the discourse (meaning the discourse with Cullen) consisted in telling the editor of this paper (the Aurora) his name, and that he was the same person who had been formerly at Calcutta. This (says the editor of the Aurora) is the modest character (meaning Cullen, now Carpenter) who talks of delicacy and veracity, like Mother Cole of religion and chastity. [N. B. Mother Cole is the hypocritical old bawd spoken of in Foote's comedy of the Minor.]

"There is not (continues the Aurora) more than a slight shade of difference between Cullen and Coleman—they both hold the same maxims in politics, for principles they have none, and the true foundation of their bickering is, that the New-York portion of the *million* which Cobbett (that is, Porcupine) says is expended by England in America, will not be sufficient to compensate so many competitors."

That the Federal faction associated with the emissary Cullen, is proved by their advertising their nomination of charter officers in his paper. They now begin to cast him off. Two of the Federal editors, Coleman and Lewis, have each of them published against him. How is this change to be accounted for? For every change must have a motive.

A writer in the *American Citizen*, of October 28, under the signature of "A Republican," supposes the cause to be jealousy of Cullen as their literary rival; but there could be no occasion for this, for Cullen is but a poor creature. The *Philadelphia Aurora*, of the 28th, concludes it to be a quarrel about the division of the spoil, that is, about the division of the mil-

lion pounds sterling, which Cobbett (Porcupine) says, the English government expends in America. The more fool they for doing so—for though the generality of newspaper printers may be bought or hired to print any thing, the farmers, who are the main stay of the country, care nothing about the clamour of printers, nor about the ravings of anonymous scribblers. These things serve them to laugh at. The press is become too common to be credited, unless the writer be known.

But without supposing any other cause why the Federalists have thrown off Cullen, the case is, that the project which this emissary went upon, that of an alliance offensive and defensive with Britain, would have been the ruin of the merchants, the greater part of whom are of the Federal faction. These men, though ignorant in politics, have, from habit, some talent for speculation; and they could not but see, unless they were stone-blind, that if such an alliance was formed, the whole of the carrying trade would be lost at once, for the United States, after that alliance, would no longer be a neutral nation, nor be considered or treated as such. And as men when they begin to think do not stop at the first thought, for thought begets thought, they would soon see that the trade to Bourdeaux, which is greater than the trade to London, would be lost also; and by thinking a little farther, they would discover that Amsterdam and all the ports of the continent of Europe would be shut against American vessels, as they are now shut against the English. Allies must share the same fate.

Whether Coleman and Lewis saw this before the faction to which they belong discovered it, I leave to be settled among themselves. They might also apprehend that the continual abuse and blackguardism in Cullen's infamous paper against the French nation, the French government, and the French minister at Washington, could not long, and would not always pass unnoticed.

COMMON SENSE.

Nov. 5, 1806.

FEDERALISTS BEGINNING TO REFORM.

THERE is some hope that the Federalists are beginning to reform; they have already descended from the high vice of *direct lying*, and have taken up with the humble vice of only asking *lying questions*. That this reformation is already begun, the New-York Evening Post, and some other Federal papers, and a quid Federal paper in Philadelphia, have shown, by their putting the following *lying* questions to Thomas Paine.

“Do you know any thing of a certain memorial transmitted to the Executive Directory of the then French Republic, by an American citizen then in France, inviting them to send over a powerful army to revolutionize America. The memorial, stating among other inducements, that there was a French party and an English party in the United States and that the army would be joined by the French party here, immediately on its arrival?”

“Do you know that his memorial made a deep impression on the minds of the Directory, and that it was referred to Citizen Pichon, late Charge des Affaires in the United States?”

“Do you know that it was with great difficulty that the Directory were induced to give up the idea of revolutionizing America, nor did they relinquish it till they were well *assured* [pray who assured them] that the citizens of all parties would unite and oppose an [any] invading army whatever?”

“Do you know [here follows a long space filled up with stars, thus ***] but how should you be acquainted with any of these things; besides, three queries at a time may be as many as you can well answer.”

Asking a lying question is a symptom of reformation in the Federalists, because it is not so bad as *telling* a lie, but the danger is, they will fall into a relapse. As their recovery from

the dreadful state they have been in is interesting to the public, it will be proper to publish now and then a bulletin of their state of health.

As a lying question may sometimes be put to shame by a true question about something that is true, I ask those quidnuncs, if John Adams, when he and the Fed. Congress of that day passed the law for annulling the treaty with France, paid the six millions of livres to France, which Colonel John Laurens and Thomas Paine brought from France to Boston, in August, 1781, two millions and a half of which was in silver money, and lodged in the bank at Philadelphia, of which Thomas Willing was then president; the rest was in clothing and military stores sufficient to load a ship and brig, besides the French frigate that brought the money?

The case is, there has been a race of self-conceited Federal ingrates, started up since "*the times that tried men's souls*," that knows nothing about those times. The writer of this, whom every body knows, could tell many more things if he was not restrained by prudence; but the foolish Federalists have no prudence. They blunder on, and force out explanations that prudence requires to be concealed.

C——N S——.

Nov. 10, 1806.

TO A FRIEND OF PEACE.

The American Citizen of Nov. 5, says, "There appeared in The People's Friend (the paper of the emissary Cullen, alias Carpenter) of yesterday, in the Commercial Advertiser, and the Evening Post, a two column essay signed A Friend to Peace, which from first to last of it is a bitter invective against the National Administration for not fortifying the port of New-York. This Essay, written by some Federal hand, most probably by Mr. King, made its appearance the same morning in his Excellency's quid paper, the Morning Chronicle. See the People's Friend and Morning Chronicle of yesterday."

THE first remark that offers itself upon this subject, is the choice which the writer or writers of the forementioned two column essay made of the newspaper in which their piece appeared. They chose for that purpose the paper of the emissary Cullen, alias Carpenter, whose paper is continually filled in the first place with abuse and blackguardism against the national administration, to which the proposed address of the Federal faction for fortifying the port of New-York is to be addressed, which shows that this proposed address is a mere trick for the purpose of amusing the people. In the second place, the paper of this emissary, whom the Anglo-Federal faction protects, for it is they who protect them, and not the people, is crammed with the most vulgar and outrageous abuse against the French nation, the French government, the French minister at Washington; and now this emissary, and those who associate with him, are crying out to the citizens of all other states, to be at the expense of fortify-

ing New-York, against the apprehended consequences of their own abuse, for that is the only danger to which the place is exposed.

The people of Boston, of Philadelphia, of Baltimore, of Charleston, and other commercial places, all which are approachable by ships of war, do not call on New-York to be at the expense of fortifying their town; why then does a faction in New-York call on them? The answer is, that those places, though they have their local disputes, do not harbour an emissary of one belligerent nation against another belligerent nation, and a Federal faction in New-York does.

The faction says, in their forementioned address, that "among the most important duties of government, is the application of the public funds to the means of security against foreign invasion and *insult*." But it is the faction itself that gives the *insult*, by their continually insulting the French nation and government, and now they want to be protected against the apprehended consequences of that insult. It is an insult to France to harbour the emissary Cullen, alias Mac Cullen, alias Carpenter, for he has passed by all these names, and it would be an insult to England to harbour a French emissary. A neutral nation violates its neutrality when it harbours the emissary of any belligerent nation. It was the doing of this that was the cause of the overthrow of Switzerland. Basle, in Switzerland, was the harbour of British emissaries.

If Rufus King is the writer of the forementioned foolish piece, for it is tediously and foolishly written, he must know, for he has been (God knows!) a foreign minister himself, that it is an injunction on every foreign minister to transmit a weekly account to his government, if the opportunity offers, of every thing that passes in the nation to which he is sent, that has reference to the interest of the nation he represents. The movements, therefore, of the Anglo-Federal faction in New-York, will of consequence be known to the French government, but, at the same time, that government will see, by the opposition made to those movements, that they are the work of a vulgar and despicable faction, and not of the

people. And so far as the writer of this (who is the same person who wrote the pamphlet *Common Sense*, the beginning of January, 1776, and the several numbers of the *Crisis* during that war) has made an opposition to those movements, and distinguished between the faction and the people; he has been the friend of the people. As to the faction itself, *Thomas Paine* cares nothing about it; but he has been civil enough to warn it of its danger. If Rufus King, in case he is the writer of the piece in Cullen's paper of November 4, and in the *Morning Chronicle* of the same day, will say in direct terms what he there insinuates indirectly, that *Thomas Paine invited two or three thousand French troops to plunder the city*, Thomas Paine will honour Rufus King with a prosecution for LYING. A faction must be in a lamentable condition indeed, when it is obliged to seek refuge in lying. It ought to recollect, that nothing is more easy than to tell a lie, and nothing more difficult than to support the lie after it is told.

But all this affectation about fortifying New-York is a mere electioneering Federal bubble. Why did they not think of it in the administration of John Adams, or in that of Washington? Why is it made a subject at *this* time, and was not at *that* time? New-York is in no more danger *now* than it was *then*, nor than any other commercial town or city of the union is in, except it be the danger the faction brings upon it, by harbouring and encouraging an emissary of one belligerent nation against another.

But supposing, for the sake of supposition, that the other states would agree to be at the expense of fortifying New-York, which is next to certain they will not, for all the Atlantic states have commercial towns of their own, how, I ask, is New-York to be fortified, for I deny the practicability of fortifying it? It is nature more than art that renders places defensible, and the situation of New-York does not admit of defence. Where any foreign power disposed to attack it, they would not attack it in front by ships of war. They would pass the city, either on the East river, or the North river, or both, and land their troops some miles above the city, and march down upon it, or they would come down

the East river for that purpose, or they would land on the east shore of Long Island, and march across the island, and pass the East river in boats they would bring with them. If the Federal faction will exhibit their plan of defence, if they have any, the writer of this will show them the absurdity of it, for he believes that he knows more, because he has seen more of fortified places than they have.

The case is, that New-York is the worst situation for defence that could be chosen. The original plan for building the city was at Harlem, which is a better situation, both for commerce and defence, than the point of the island is, where the city now stands. The waters of the North river and the East river, by means of the river at Kingsbridge, unite at Harlem, and the market would be seven or eight miles nearer the country than it now is.

COMMON SENSE.

Nov. 13, 1806.

NOTIFICATIONS

RESPECTING THE IMPOSTOR CULLEN, ALIAS M'CULLEN,
ALIAS CARPENTER, THE ASSOCIATE OF THE FEDERAL-
ISTS OF NEW-YORK.

IN former communications respecting this impostor, I mentioned that Duane, the editor of the Philadelphia Aurora, knew him both in England and in India. Before I state Duane's further account of him, I will relate what I have been told of him in this city, New-York.

This man arrived in this city (New-York) about four years ago, and lodged at a house in which a friend of mine then was. Cullen at that time passed by the name of Mac Cullen, and as it often happens to men of his description that when the liquor is *in* the wit is *out*, he often let himself out very foolishly. He vauntingly said he had been offered great sums of money by the English ministry not to write against them. He went to his room one day, when he was in his capers, and dressed himself in an English regimental uniform, and came to show himself. [N. B. He has been a regimental deputy pay-master, and is the son of Cullen the box keeper of Crow Street Theatre, Dublin.]

In his journey from New-York, he called on Duane at Philadelphia, to sell him some types, and desired Duane to conceal his name, and not to expose him. Duane replied, (see the Aurora of Nov. 1st,) "As to revealing your secret, you have no right to impose secrecy on me. At the same time it will depend on yourself to furnish a motive for silence or publicity on the subject; and *that* will depend entirely upon the object of your coming to this country, and the course you mean to pursue in it."

Cullen. "My purpose is to have no concern with party or politics. I wish to purchase a snug farm near Washington if I can, and to occupy my leisure in literary pursuits, totally distant from politics, with which I have done for ever."

Duane. "In such a case, I can have no motive for interfering with you or your name—but let me observe, that from the knowledge which I have of you and your political connexions in England, I should be very apt to suspect that you came to this country with very different views."

Cullen. "By no means. I have done with politics for ever."

Duane. "If you have come to this country for the purpose you say, and I shall not dispute it unless good reasons appear to the contrary; if you are not come here as an enemy to civil liberty, as an *emissary of the English minister*, (meaning Pitt, who sent emissaries into Germany,) and do not pursue the same course of politics here that you did in London, your secret shall be kept; but let me tell you, that if you attempt to interfere in the political concerns of this country, or attempt to attack the principles of the government, I shall consider myself not only bound to expose you, but to present you to the world in the most open and unreserved manner."

Duane bought the types, and here the conversation ended.

Duane then continues his account of this emissary by saying, that "he (Cullen) was in the pay of the official paper of the British treasury—that Windham, the patron of Porcupine, was his patron—that his name is Cullen and not Carpenter, and that he is an Irishman, but an advocate of England, (meaning the oppressions of England over Ireland.) A man, continues Duane, so branded with infamy, may be worthy of Federal protection and countenance, but the American nation being thus explicitly apprised of the character of this emissary, will be able at once to value his writings, and the views of his supporters."

Here ends Duane's account of him in the *Aurora* of November 1st.

In the *Aurora* of the 6th, Duane renews the subject. "It is, says he, an act of public justice to pursue this fellow Cullen,

alias Carpenter, through all his windings. The countenancing such an impostor is a stigma on society; and the maintenance of him in one of our capital cities, (New-York,) is a libel on the country, its morals, and its justice. While this man Cullen edited the Charleston Courier, we rarely noticed him; but his conduct there became such that it drew forth from some person well informed, a portraiture of the man. His departure soon followed.

“His course since he has been put in possession of a paper at New-York, we have watched, because that city is the chief rendezvous of English influence, and the principal asylum of old toryism.”

Aurora, Nov. 7th.—“The English emissary Cullen at New-York, has never stated his transactions as a deputy pay-master under the appointment of Mr. Windham, [Porcupine’s patron.] We are to presume his ‘miscarriage’ in that situation produced his transit to the United States, and the *change of his name to Carpenter.*”

Here ends the extracts from the Aurora.

The conduct and character of this Cullen, alias Mac Cullen, alias Carpenter, are so very suspicious, that unless he can give some satisfactory account of himself, and on what recommendation he came to this country, and call on some person of character to attest and answer for him, he ought not to be permitted to stay in the city. His continuance here will bring trouble. He is marked with all the suspicious tokens of an impostor, and he exhibits the character of an emissary.

As he is a British subject, and not a citizen of the United States, and is a stranger here, and in disguise, will Mr. Erskine, the British minister, take him under his patronage and answer for him? If not, it will be best to send him away. This is giving Cullen a chance he does not deserve.

It is a circumstance not easily accounted for, that at the very instant Mr. Erskine, a gentleman of fair fame and respectable connexions, is arrived at Washington on a mission to the government of the United States, that an impostor under a

borrowed name, and furnished with British regimentals, is employing himself in abusing, with the most infamous language of drunken intoxication, the same government Mr. Erskine is commissioned to treat with. Can Rufus King, or any man of mischief, explain this?

COMMON SENSE.

Nov. 19, 1806.

ON THE EMISSARY CULLEN.

It appears by a paragraph in the *Public Advertiser*, that Cullen, alias *Carpenter*, or whatever his name is, if he has any name, has commenced a prosecution against the printer or publisher of the *Public Advertiser*, but the prosecution does not say what it is for. Some advantages will arise from this, and some amusement also. He will now have to identify himself, and prove who he is, and upon what recommendation he came to America, and get some persons of respectability, if he can, to attest for him. We have not established liberty as an asylum for impostors. Mr. Duane, of Philadelphia, knew him in India and in England, and he can prove that he did not then go by the name he now goes by, and the man that changes his name is an impostor. The law can know nothing of such persons, but for the purpose of punishing them.

Thomas Paine will also know where to find him when the prosecution comes on, for he concealed himself from all the inquiries Mr. Paine made to find him or his place of residence. The case is, that Cullen's paper had falsified a publication written by Mr. Paine, and published in the *Citizen*, on the danger to which a neutral nation exposed itself by harbouring an *emissary*, or a suspected emissary, of one belligerent nation against another belligerent nation. This publication was falsified in Cullen's paper, insidiously entitled "The People's Friend." Mr. Paine copied off the falsifications, and desired a friend of his, a merchant in John-street, to call on Cullen, and read the falsifications to him, and demand who was the writer of them. The gentleman called at the printing office, but Cullen, alias Carpenter, was not there. The gentleman left word that he would call the next day, and that he had something to communicate to Mr. Car-

penter. He called accordingly, but Carpenter was not there. He then asked the persons in the office where Mr. Carpenter lodged; they said they did not know, but they believed it was a good way off. The gentleman then left word for the third time, that he would call the next day, which he did, but Carpenter was not to be found, nor could any account be given of him. Mr. Paine will now know where to find him.

This man with two or three names has laid his damages at three thousand dollars. One way to get rich is first to be a rascal, and then prosecute for exposing the rascality. But why did he not lay the damages at an hundred thousand dollars. There is a precedent for this

April 8, 1807

OF THE AFFAIRS OF ENGLAND.

THE English nation and government exhibit at this time a curious spectacle to the world. Their king and the cabinet are quarrelling, and their partisans in this country, the Fed and Tory faction, know not which side to take.

Their military affairs also are in as bad condition as their domestic. They began this war themselves, and they cannot now see their way out of it. Buonaparte has turned all their projects against them. Grenville, in his speech on the dispute between the king and the cabinet, (see the Public Advertiser of Monday, May 25,) speaks of the wretched condition of the coalition against France on the continent. He then looks forward with apprehension to two circumstances he thinks probable. The one, peace on the continent; the other, the continuance of the war with England; two circumstances, he says, "particularly dangerous to this country." The war on the continent was set on foot by the English government, to ward off the descent upon England; and as all the partisans England had on the continent have been defeated, it is probable they would make peace if they could. This is what Grenville is afraid of.

The murderous battle of Prussian Eylau, the last we have news of, between the French and the Russians, in which the Feds and Tories say the French were defeated, took place on the 8th February. Grenville's speech in the English parliament is dated March 23, six weeks and one day after the battle, and he speaks in that speech of "*the total destruction of the power of Prussia, and the establishment of the power of France,*" but he says not a syllable about any advantages gained by the Russians, so the poor Feds and Tories must invent some new lie.

Supposing peace to take place on the continent, and the war with England to continue, Grenville then alludes to an invasion of England by France. "*In case of an invasion, (says he,) it might be necessary to shift troops from one part of the empire to another.*" We see by this that he puts no dependence on the English navy to prevent it. That navy costs 68,000,000 dollars annually, and it is not considered a match for the French gun-boats in making a descent; yet our Federal wise-acres are crying out for an American navy. But as they do this to amuse and impose upon the public, they take care to keep the expense of a navy out of sight. The present annual revenue of the United States is about 12,000,000 dollars. The much greater part of which is appropriated to the discharge of the national debt incurred by the revolutionary war, and the additional debts incurred by the improvident administration of Washington and Adams. The remainder is for the current expenses of the year, out of which the economy of the present administration has saved a few hundred thousand dollars. But were we to go into the ridiculous project of a navy, it would require new taxes to the amount of 50,000,000 dollars. This the Feds keep out of sight. But to return to the affairs of England.

In 1714, the English nation, for the principles of government were not understood at that time, sent to Hanover for a man and his family, George the First, to come and govern them. The poor man knew nothing about England, he had never been there, knew nothing of its laws, and could not speak a word of English, and when he got in a passion, which he often did, he used to kick his hat about the room.

His son, George the Second, was the same sort of man as to dulness of capacity as his father, but was not so peaceable, for the wars of George the First were carried on against his hat, but as George the Second thought he knew something of military wars, he was often engaged in continental wars, in which England as a nation and an island ought to have had nothing to do; and the present incumbent, George the Third, and *last*, has hardly ever been at peace; but he is sly enough to stay at home and set other nations together by the ears, and the

poor English have to pay the expense, till they have hardly bread to eat themselves. This is the short history of the Guelphs, or *Whelps*, of Hanover.

The insults which Grenville and the cabinet complain of, and the injuries and miseries the nation suffer, from the insane and mal-conduct of the present incumbent, they may thank themselves for, or rather their fathers and grand-fathers, who imported them from Hanover; and the best thing the nation can now do, is to send them away. They may then have peace.

ONE WHO KNOWS ENGLAND.

June 1, 1807

TO THE PEOPLE OF NEW-YORK.

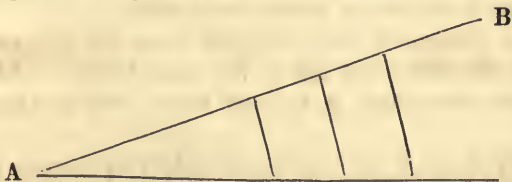
THE election for charter officers last year was carried by the Federal and Quid trick of fortification, and now the people are to be amused and duped by a new trick of obstructions.

The only eligible mode of obstruction, is that proposed by Franklin for the Delaware, in '76, an account of which was given in the Public Advertiser of the 6th, and republished in the Philadelphia Aurora of the 8th August.*

* OF OBSTRUCTIONS AGAINST SHIPS.

The best and only eligible mode of obstruction against the ships of an enemy, is that proposed by *Doctor Franklin* for the defence of the Delaware, and executed in '76.

It consisted of a frame, the bottom of which is thick plank, about twenty or twenty-five feet square. On this bottom was fixed two or three beams, about seven or eight inches square, pointed with iron, and standing in the direction of A. B. The beams were braced together cross the tops, and supported by uprights from the bottom. When they were ready for sinking, they were floated to the place, and loaded with stone enough to sink them, for after they were sunk they became fast by bedding themselves in the bottom of the river. They were sunk about twenty feet from each other. An opening of forty or fifty feet was left in the channel of the river for our own vessels, and a frame ready for sinking as soon as the ships of an enemy should appear, was anchored near the opening. There were pilots to conduct our own vessels through. They were called *chevaux de frize pilots*; but it happened that one vessel, either by the carelessness of the pilot, or the head-strongness of the captain who would come through without a pilot, run on one of the iron pointed forks and was sunk. She had a large hole through her bow.



These, and the gun-boats, were the defence of the Delaware; and they were so far effectual, that when General Howe sailed with his army from New-York to take possession of Philadelphia, he avoided coming up the Delaware, and went round by the Chesapeake to the head of Elk, and marched to Philadelphia by land.

If the depth of water between Robins' Reef and Mud Flat is not more

The plan of obstruction now proposed for New-York is by blocks, that is, solid bodies of stone or earth, in the manner of wharves. This was first suggested by Selah Strong, chairman of the committee of the Corporation; and in a publication by Mr. Stevens, of Hoboken, which contains many just observations on ships and batteries, he adopts the same unfortunate idea of obstruction by blocks. The blocks to be "25 or 30 feet square, or *larger*; at the distance of 50 or 60 feet from each other." And the editor of the New-York American Citizen, in introducing Mr. Smith's piece in his paper of Saturday last, says, why not, "*to make assurance doubly sure, to give us in fact protection, carry the obstruction by blocks or other wise entirely across from Robins' Reef to Mud Flat.*"

This, most certainly, would prevent hostile ships coming to the city, and it is equally as certain it would prevent the tide coming up, and lay the wharves at New-York dry, and be the ruin of all the towns on the North River that depend for commerce on tide water. This, the projectors of obstructions by blocks never thought of; but projectors should think of every thing, or they will make ruinous work. If Selah Strong's project is adopted, New-York is ruined, for the obstruction by blocks cannot afterwards be removed.

Every alteration made in the channel of a water course, whether it be in the natural current of a river or the current of a tide, will cause another alteration somewhere else.

If the obstruction be across the natural current of a river, like the obstruction of a mill-dam, the water will continue rising till it overtops the obstruction, or overflow the country above; for as the daily supply from the source will continue the same, it will have a passage somewhere.

If the obstruction be to the tide water, the effect *will* be, that the tide water will rise to the same height at the place where the obstruction is, as it did before, and no higher, but

than *thirty-six feet*, it can be obstructed as the Delaware was, provided there be gun-boats to prevent the enemy taking the obstructions up or destroying them. But to attempt to do it by filling the channel up with stone, would be an endless undertaking. The obstructions in the Delaware were completed in a short time, not more, I believe, than two or three months at most. The frames are soon made, as there is but little work about them.

AN OLD FRIEND OF '76.

the channel above the obstruction will be deprived of tide water.

The stone piers of a bridge, lessen the quantity and extent of tide water above the bridge. This every body knows that knows any thing of hydraulics. But to know it as a fact, if any person will look into Salmon's Geography, or Guthrie's Geographical Grammar, he will find, in their account of rivers and bridges in England, that before Westminster Bridge was built, which was began in 1738, the tide flowed to Kingston, about 17 or 18 miles above Westminster, but since the bridge has been built it flows no higher than Richmond, which is four miles short of Kingston. Now, if the piers of a bridge lessened the quantity of tide water, and shortened its extent four miles out of 16 or 18 miles, what must be the effect of a total, or even semi-total, obstruction by blocks of the channel between Robins' Reef and Mud Flat, on the wharves at the city, and on the long course of the North River?

In projecting obstructions, two things are absolutely necessary to be taken into view. The one is, the least possible obstruction to the water up or down; the other is, that the obstruction be such as can be removed afterwards. Neither of these entered the mind of the projectors of blocks, and both are embraced in the plan of Franklin. His frames had very little effect on the tide or the stream; and after the enemy went away they were taken up; but all the power and art of man could not remove solid blocks of stone or earth, 25 or 30 feet square, sunk several feet below the surface of the water.

If the channel between Robins' Reef and Mud Flat is not more than 36 feet, it can be obstructed as the Delaware was, and the obstructions can be defended by gun-boats and batteries, and the militia can defend the shore, as the people of Norfolk have done; but for men to be always employing themselves on imaginary fortifications, or skulking behind, or within obstructions, like a turtle within his shell, lest the crows should pick him, has a very cowardly appearance. It is not the spirit of "*the times that tried men's souls.*"

THOMAS PAINE.

August 18, 1807.

VOL. II.

REPLY TO CHEETHAM.

THE Editor of the New-York American Citizen, James Cheetham, has, consistently with his usual mode of abuse, published a long-winded piece in his paper of Thursday last, which, without doubt, he thinks clever, because it is spiteful. This piece, in the Citizen, is an attack on a publication of mine in the New-York Public Advertiser, of the preceding Tuesday, against the project of obstructions in the channel of solid blocks of stone or earth, because such obstructions "would prevent the tide coming up, and lay the wharves at the city dry, and be the ruin of all the towns on the North River that depended for commerce on tide water."

Mr. Cheetham says, "that the entire obstruction recommended in this paper (meaning his own paper) would in the harbour, is a thought which has occurred to every man in the city, vulgar or refined." Why then could not James Cheetham see it? If he had, he certainly would not have proposed such a stupid project.

Mr. Cheetham has said this, that I might not have the credit of being the first or only man that discovered the danger, and in the eagerness of his malignancy to do this, he has libelled himself; for he has proved that every other man in the city, vulgar or refined, had more sense than James Cheetham. I know not how soon other persons might see the danger of the project, but I wrote my objections against it the same day the piece appeared, which was on Saturday, and gave it to a friend on Sunday, Mr. Walter Morton, for the Public Advertiser. Mr. Morton gave the piece to the printer on Monday morning.

Mr. Cheetham, in his rage for attacking every body, and every thing that is not his own, (for he is an ugly-tempered man, and he carries the evidence of it in the vulgarity and forbid-

dingness of his countenance—God has set a mark upon Cain,) has attacked me on the ground of my political works, and in doing this he has exposed the barrenness of his understanding as fully as in the former case.

He quotes the following paragraph from a short anonymous piece of mine in the *Public Advertiser* of June 1.

“In 1714, the English nation, for the principles of free government were not understood at that time, sent to Hanover for a man and his family, George the First, to come and govern them.”

Mr. Cheetham, in remarking upon this paragraph, says, “The sending for the idiot, George the First, is true, but the lines underscored, that is, *for the principles of free government were not understood at that time*, are a libel on the venerable dead. In 1714, the principles of a free government were as well understood in England as they are now in any part of the world.”

James Cheetham is such a splenetic John Bull, that he has not discernment enough to see the result of his own statements, for, if the principles of free government were as well understood in England in 1714 as they are now in any part of the world, including America, they certainly would not have sent to Hanover for an idiot to govern them! And as they did send to Hanover for an idiot to govern them, it proves that the principles of free, that is, representative government, were not understood in England at that time.

After this, Mr. Cheetham speaks much about *Locke*, and says, “that all political elementary writers on government since the days of *Locke*, including Mr. Paine, are but the mere retailers of his ideas and doctrines.” This is John Bullism all over.

He also says, that “On hereditary and *elective* government, Mr. Paine, in his *Common Sense* and *Rights of Man*, has followed *Locke* idea for idea.” It may be so for what I know, for I never read *Locke*, nor ever had the work in my hand, and by what I have heard of it from *Horne Tooke*, I had no inducement to read it. It is a speculative, not a practical work, and the style of it is heavy and tedious, as all *Locke*’s writings are.

I suppose Locke has spoken of hereditary and *Elective Monarchy*, but the representative as laid down in Common Sense and Rights of Man, is an entire different thing to elective monarchy. So far from taking any ideas from Locke or from any body else, it was the absurd expression of a mere John Bull in England, about the year 1773, that first caused me to turn my mind to systems of government. In speaking of the then king of Prussia, called the Great Frederick, he said, "He is the right sort of man for a king, for he has a deal of the devil in him." This set me to think if a system of government could not exist that did not require the devil, and I succeeded without any help from any body. It is a great deal may be learned from absurdity, and I expect to learn something from James Cheetham. When I do, I will let him know it in the Public Advertiser.

In the conclusion of the piece of mine, which Mr. Cheetham has vomited his spleen upon, I threw out some reproach against those who, instead of practising themselves in arms and artillery, that they might be prepared to defend New-York, should it be attacked, were continually employing themselves on imaginary fortifications, and skulking behind projects of obstruction. As Mr. Cheetham supposed himself included in this description, (and he thought right,) he made, as he imagined, an effectual retort, but in doing this, as in every thing else he does, he betrayed his want of knowledge, both as to the spirit and circumstances of the times he speaks of.

"I would not," says Mr. Cheetham, "charge with cowardice that gentleman, (meaning me,) who, in the 'times that tried men's souls,' stuck very correctly to his pen in a *safe retreat*, and never handled a musket offensively."

By this paragraph, Mr. Cheetham must have supposed, that when Congress retreated from Philadelphia to Baltimore, in the "times that tried men's souls," that I retreated with them as Secretary to the Committee of Foreign Affairs.

In the first place, the Committee for Foreign Affairs did not exist at that time.

In the next place, I served in the army the whole of the "time that tried men's souls," from the beginning to the end.

Soon after the declaration of independence, July 4, 1776, congress recommended that a body of ten thousand men, to be called the flying camp, because it was to act wherever necessary, should be formed from the militia and volunteers of Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Maryland. I went with one division from Pennsylvania, under General Roberdeau. We were stationed at Perth Amboy, and afterwards at Bergen; and when the time of the flying camp expired, and they went home, I went to Fort Lee, and served as aid-de-camp to Greene, who commanded at Fort Lee, and was with him through the whole of the black times of that trying campaign.

I began the first number of the Crisis, beginning with the well-known expression, ("These are the times that try men's souls,") at Newark, upon the retreat from Fort Lee, and continued writing it at every place we stopt at, and had it printed at Philadelphia the 19th of December, six days before the taking the Hessians at Trenton, which, with the affair at Princeton, the week after, put an end to the black times.

It therefore is not true, that I stuck to my pen in a safe retreat with congress from Philadelphia to Baltimore in the "times that tried men's souls." But, if I had done so, I should not have published the cowardice James Cheetham has done. In speaking of the affair of the *Driver* sloop of war, at Charleston, South Carolina, he said in his paper, if the *Driver* and her comrades should take into their heads to come here, (New-York,) we must submit. What abominable cowardice, for a man to have such a thought in his mind, that a city containing twenty thousand able-bodied men, numbers of them as stout in person as himself, should submit to a sloop of war containing about a hundred and fifty men.

After this, Mr. Cheetham will take care how he attacks old revolutionary characters, whose undiscouraged intrepidity, in the "times that tried men's souls," made a home for him to come to.

THOMAS PAINE.

New-York, Aug. 21, 1807.

EXTRACT OF A LETTER
TO DR. MITCHELL, SENATOR FOR THE STATE OF
NEW-YORK,

WRITTEN IMMEDIATELY SUBSEQUENT TO THE DISCHARGE
OF AARON BURR.

WHEREAS time, experience, and circumstances, have shown that the article in the Federal Constitution, which establishes the judiciary, is vague and defective, and requires amendment.

According to that article, the judges hold their offices during, that is, *on the condition of good behaviour*. Yet the Constitution has not authorized any power to take cognizance of that good behaviour, or the breach of it. Every law, and a constitution is the supreme law, point out the mode of redress, at the same time that it specifies the offence. But the Federal Constitution is defective in this important particular. This being the case, therefore resolved,

That the following amendment to the article in the Federal Constitution, which establishes the judiciary, be proposed to the States severally, for their concurrence therein; that is to say,

That after the words as they now stand in the article, "the judges of the supreme and inferior courts shall hold their offices during good behaviour," to add, *but for reasonable cause, which shall not be sufficient ground for impeachment, the President may remove any of them, on the address of a majority of both houses of Congress.*

* * * * *

It may be proper to observe, that the people of the United States have no share in the appointment of judges, nor any control over them afterwards. And if their representatives in Congress have no cognizance of judges as to good behaviour, the judiciary may become domineering or dangerous. They

lie open to the intrigues of a foreign enemy, or any corrupt party in the States associated with that enemy, or projecting a separation of the union. It is fair to suppose, that those who formed the Constitution, never thought of this, when they made the judges independent of our own executive.

Yours,

THOMAS PAINE.

August, 1807.

REPRIMAND TO JAMES CHEETHAM.

IF James Cheetham, editor of the New-York American Citizen, thinks to draw me into a controversy with him, he is greatly mistaken. In the first place, I hold him too cheap; and his well known character for abuse and black-guarding, renders any altercation with him dishonourable; and besides this, it would take up too much of my time to put his blunders to rights. He cannot write without blundering, neither can he write truth, of which I will give another instance.

He quotes the following paragraph from the first part of *Rights of Man*, and then grounds a false assertion upon it.

“Every age and generation must be as free to act for itself, in all cases, as the ages and generations that preceded it. The vanity and presumption of governing beyond the grave, is the most ridiculous and insolent of all tyrannies. Man has no property in man, neither has one generation a property in the generation that is to follow.”

Mr. Cheetham having made this short quotation, says, “Mr. Paine here and there glances at the absurdity of hereditary government, but the passage just quoted is the *only* attempt at *argument* against it contained in the *Rights of Man*.”

Is James Cheetham an idiot, or has the envy and malignity of his mind possessed him with a spirit of wilful lying?

The short passage he has quoted, (which is taken from the middle of a paragraph,) is on the third, and in some editions on the fourth page of the first part of *Rights of Man*. It contains a general principle, on which the arguments and statements against hereditary succession are founded in the progress of that work.

If Mr. Cheetham had looked further into the work, *Rights of Man*, he would have come to a paragraph ending with the

expression, "*Hereditary succession cannot be established as a legal thing.*" The work then goes on to say,

"In order to arrive at a more perfect decision on this head, (that is, that hereditary succession cannot be established as a legal thing,) it is proper to consider the generation which undertakes to establish a family with hereditary powers, apart and separate from the generations which are to follow, and also to consider the character in which that generation acts with respect to succeeding generations.

"The generation which selects a person and puts him at the head of its government with the title of king, or any other distinction, acts its own choice, be it wise or foolish, as a free agent for itself. The person so set up is not hereditary, but selected and appointed, and the generation which sets him up do not live under an hereditary government, but under a government of its own choice and establishment. Were the generation which sets him up, and the person so set up, to live forever, it never could become hereditary succession; and, of consequence, hereditary succession can only take place on the death of the first parties.

"As, therefore, hereditary succession is out of the question with respect to the first generation, we have now to consider the character in which that generation acts with respect to the commencing generation, and to all succeeding ones.

"It assumes a character to which it has neither right nor title. It changes itself from a legislator to a testator, and affects to make its will, which is to have operation after the demise of the makers, to bequeath the government; and it not only attempts to bequeath, but to establish over the succeeding generation a new and different form of government from that under which itself lived. Itself, as already observed, lived not under a hereditary government, but under a government of its own choice and establishment, and it now attempts, by virtue of a will and testament, which it has not authority to make, to take from the commencing generation, and all succeeding ones, the right and free agency by which itself acted."

Now, without giving any further extracts from the work, *Rights of Man*, on the subject of hereditary succession, what is here given ought to cover James Cheetham with shame for

the falsehood he has advanced. But as a man who has no sense of honour, has no sense of shame, Mr. Cheetham will be able to read this with an unblushing front.

Several writers before Locke had remarked on the absurdity of hereditary succession, but there they stopped. Buchanan, a Scots historian, who lived more than a hundred years before Locke, reproaches Malcomb II. king of Scotland, and his father, Kenethus, for making the crown of Scotland hereditary in his family, "by which means," says Buchanan, "the kingdom must frequently be possessed by a child or a fool; whereas before, the Scots used to make choice of that prince of the royal family that was best qualified to govern and protect his people."

But I know of no author, nor of any work, before Common Sense and Rights of Man appeared, that has attacked and exposed hereditary succession on the ground of illegality, which is the strongest of all grounds to attack it upon; for if the right to set it up do not exist, and that it does not is certain, because it is establishing a form of government, *not for themselves*, but for a future race of people, all discussion upon the subject ends at once. But James Cheetham has not sense enough to see this.

He has got something in his head about Locke, and he keeps it there, for he does not give a single quotation from him to support the random assertion he makes concerning Locke.

"It is to Locke in particular, (says Cheetham,) who wrote his incomparable essay on government in 1689, that we are almost wholly indebted for those political lights which conducted us to our revolution."

This is both libellous and false. The revolutionary contest began in an opposition to the assumed right of the British parliament "*to bind America in all cases whatsoever*," and there can be nothing in Locke, who wrote in 1689, that can have reference to such a case. The tax upon tea, which brought on hostilities, was an experiment on the part of the British government to enforce the practice of that assumed right, which was called *the declaratory act*. James Cheetham talks of times and circumstances he knows nothing of, for he did not come here till several years after the war; yet in speaking of the

revolution, he uses the words *we*, and *us*, and *our* revolution. It is common in England, in ridiculing self-conceited importance, to say, What a long tail *our* cat has got!

The people of America, in conducting their revolution, learned nothing from Locke; nor was his name, or his work, ever mentioned during the revolution, that I know of. The case America was in was a new one, without any former example, and the people had to find their way as well as they could by the lights that arose among themselves, of which I can honestly and proudly say, I did my part. Locke was employed by the first settlers of South Carolina to draw up a form of government for that province, but it was such an inconsistent aristocratical thing, that it was rejected. Perhaps Mr. Cheetham does not know of this, but he may know it if he will inquire.

Mr. Cheetham hypocritically says, "I advise Mr. Paine, as a friend, to write no more."

In return for this civility in *words*, I will inform him of something for his good, which is, that he has been going down hill in the opinion of the Republicans for a long time past. Good principles will defend themselves; but the abuse and scurrility in Cheetham's paper has given very general offence to his subscribers. Another complaint is, that his paper is not a newspaper. It does not give the news from Europe till it becomes old in every other paper. There are, perhaps, two causes for this: as a John Bull, he does not like the news from Europe; and as a dabbler in scribbling, he prefers filling his paper with his own stuff.

It is probable he will be called upon, to explain on what ground of compromise (for it has the appearance of a compromise) the intimacy between him and the anglo Irish emissary Cullen, alias Carpenter, began and continued. He is now giving symptoms of becoming a successor of Cullen, as Cullen was the successor of Cobbet. As there is now a well-conducted Republican paper established in New-York, (the Public Advertiser,) Mr. Cheetham cannot have the same range for his scurrility he had before.

THOMAS PAINE.

Sept. 5, 1807.

CHEETHAM AND HIS TORY PAPER.*

CHEETHAM is frequently giving symptoms of being the successor of *Cullen*, alias *Carpenter*, as Cullen was the successor of *Cobbet*, alias *Porcupine*. Like him, he is seeking to involve the United States in a quarrel with France for the benefit of England.

In his paper of Tuesday, Sept. 22, he has a long abusive piece against France, under the title of "*Remarks*" on the speech of the Arch Chancellor of France to the French Senate. This is a matter that Cheetham, as an adopted American citizen, has no business with; and as a John Bull it is impertinence in him to come here to spit out his venom against France. But Cheetham cannot live without quarrelling, nor write without abuse. He is a disgrace to the Republicans, whose principle is to live in peace and friendship with all nations, and not to interfere in the domestic concerns of any.

Cheetham seems to regret that peace is made on the continent of Europe, and he shows his spleen against it by the following roundabout scurrilous paragraph.

"The people of France (says he) now breathe the air of peace, under slavery, closer, more systematic, military and universal, (Cheetham knows nothing about it,) than that with which they were overwhelmed previous to the beginning of the long continued calamity." This is spoken exactly in the character of a stupid prejudiced John Bull, who, shut up in his island, and ignorant of the world, supposes all nations slaves but themselves; whereas those at a distance can see, that of all people enslaved by their own governments, none are so much so as the people of England. Had Cheetham staid in England till this time, he would have had to shoulder a musket, and this would have been dreadful to him, for, as all bullies are cow-

* This piece was the cause of a duel between Cheetham and Franks.

ards, the smell of gunpowder would be as horrid to Cheetham, as the scent of a skunk to other animals.

The danger to which the city of New-York was exposed, by the continual abuse of France in such papers as Cullen's, was, that the French government might be induced to consider the city of New-York as a British colony, such as it was during the revolutionary war, and exclude her from the commerce of the continent of Europe, as she has excluded Britain. Cheetham is following the footsteps of Cullen.

The French nation, under all its changes of government, has always behaved in a civil and friendly manner to the United States. We have no cause of dispute with France. It was by the aid of France in men, money, and ships,* that the revolution and independence of the United States were so completely established, and it is scarcely sufferable that a prejudiced and surly-tempered John Bull should fix himself among us to abuse a friendly power.

Sept. 25, 1807.

* Six thousand French troops under General Rochambeau, and thirty-one sail of the line under Admiral De Grasse, assisted at the capture of Cornwallis at York Town, Virginia, which put an end to the war.

NOTE TO CHEETHAM.

MR. CHEETHAM,

Oct. 27, 1807.

UNLESS you make a public apology for the abuse and falsehood in your paper of Tuesday, Oct. 27, respecting me, I will prosecute you for lying.

It is by your talent for abuse and falsehood, that you have brought so many prosecutions on your back. You cannot even state truth without running it to falsehood. There was matter enough against Morgan Lewis without going a syllable beyond the truth

THOMAS PAINE.

TO THE CITIZENS OF NEW-YORK.

IN a letter from the President of the United States, of October 9, after his mentioning that he did not expect the Revenge back under a month from that date, adds, "*In the mean time, all the little circumstances coming to our knowledge are unfavourable to our wishes for peace.*"

As this might be useful information to men in mercantile pursuits and speculations, and who had no guide to go by, whether to send out their vessels, or not, I mentioned it to such of my Republican friends as called to see me; and that the information, if so useful, might not be confined to one distinction of men only, I mentioned it also to Mr. Coleman, of the Evening Post, who came to me on account of a piece I sent him, concerning Cheetham's insulting message to Mr. Frank, of the Public Advertiser. How it got into the newspapers I know not; Mr. Coleman, I suppose, can give the best account of that.

Cheetham then published a most abusive piece in his paper, and in his vulgar style of language said, "*Paine has told a lie,*" and then insinuated as if I had forged the letter. It is by his propensity to blackguarding and lying, that he has brought so many prosecutions on his back. He says he has nine. He will now have one more. If an unprincipled bully cannot be reformed, he can be punished.

THOMAS PAINE.

Nov. 20, 1807.

THE EMISSARY CHEETHAM.

CHEETHAM can now be considered in no other light than a British emissary, or successor to the impostor Cullen, alias Carpenter, whom Cheetham handed out in his newspaper, as a gentlemanly sort of a man. Cheetham finding the Republicans are casting him off, is holding out signs to be employed as a British partizan.

Cheetham, in his papers of Dec. 29 and 30, has two long pieces about the embargo, which he labours to prove is not laid in consequence of any dispute with England, but in consequence of some imperious demands on the part of France. This John Bull is an idiot in diplomatic affairs.

Cheetham says, "Mr. Monroe's dispatches, which were laid before Congress, and which Congress *concluded did not authorize an embargo*, are dated London, Oct. 10th. In the opinion of Congress, (continues Cheetham,) and I venture to say of Mr. Monroe, an immediate war with England was therefore by no means probable."

Cheetham has been so long in the habit of giving false information, that truth is to him like a foreign language.

The President laid the dispatches of Mr. Monroe, of Oct. 10th, before Congress; but as they were in daily expectation of later information by the arrival of the *Revenge* schooner, and also of the personal arrival of Mr. Monroe, Congress received it as preparatory information, but came to no conclusion on their contents.

Cheetham says, that the *Leopard*, which brought Mr. Monroe's dispatches, of Oct. 10th, sailed from London on the 16th of October, and that the *Revenge* sailed from London for *Cherburgh*, on the same day, at which time, says Cheetham, there was no probability of an immediate war with England.

In a letter I received from London, dated Oct. 15th, and

which I published in the Philadelphia Aurora, and in the New-York Public Advertiser, the writer, in speaking of the British ministry, says, "Their cup of iniquity is nearly full, they only want to go to war with America to fill it up; and it is the opinion here (London) that that measure is resolved on. They will make no concessions unless it be to deceive." The letter is dated one day before the *Revenge* sailed from London, and I suppose came by the *Revenge*: yet Cheetham tells his readers there was then no probability of a war with America. Cheetham's information is never entitled to credit.

When the *Revenge* sailed with the President's proclamation, and the instructions to Mr. Monroe, the writer of this knows she was ordered to come from London to France. It was expected she would be detained in the two countries about a month, and be back here about the 16th of November.

Her coming from London to France, would give Mr. Monroe the opportunity (for foreign ministers do not correspond by post, but by express) of communicating to Mr. Armstrong, at Paris, the plans and projects of the British ministry.

Soon after the arrival of the *Revenge* at Cherburgh, a French port on the Channel, General Armstrong sent circular letters to the American Consuls in France, to hasten the departure of the American vessels as fast as possible. Several paragraphs in the English newspapers, and which have been copied into the American papers, stated, that the British ministry intended to seize American vessels coming to, or going from, any port in France. As Mr. Monroe would get knowledge of this, as well as the writer of the letter to Thomas Paine, of Oct. 15th, he would communicate it to General Armstrong, at Paris; and this accounts for General Armstrong's circular letter, after the arrival of the *Revenge* schooner from London.

If Britain put her threat in force, that of taking American vessels going to or coming from France, it is probable the French government will retaliate, and take American vessels going to or coming from England; and this resolution on the part of France, has a natural tendency to prevent American vessels being taken, because Britain, by setting the example, will suffer more by it than France.

The British blockading decree, that of seizing neutral vessels going to or from France, was to have been published on the 14th of November, but the news from London of the 14th, by the *Jane*, is silent on the subject. The apprehension of retaliation has, most probably, stopped the British ministry in their career.

Jan. 7, 1808.

TO THE FEDERAL FACTION.

You are going the right way to ruin the country—and you are such blind politicians, you have not discernment enough to see it. The United States have flourished, unrivalled in commerce, fifteen or sixteen years. But it is not a permanent state of things. It arose from the circumstances of the war, and most probably will change at the close of the present war. The Federalists give provocation enough to promote it.

The great probability is, that when the present war ends, Buonaparte will establish a navigation act for France and the countries of Europe, and not permit any foreign articles to be brought to those countries, but such as are produced in the country to which the vessel belongs that brings them. This is the plan the English navigation act goes upon. Before that act was passed, the Dutch used to be the carriers for the English nation; but this act put a stop to it. Buonaparte says he wants ships, commerce, and colonies. By following this plan, he will get them, and also sailors to man them, and the Dutch will become the principal carriers of the European countries.

As this will most probably be the case, can any thing be more unwise and foolish, than the conduct of the Federal faction, who are continually abusing and blackguarding France and Buonaparte, and putting them in a fit disposition to cut short American commerce? There is nobody that has gone further in this style of abuse and ignorance than the impostor Cheetham; but he has run his length, and is now posted in every meeting in the city, as a professed British hireling would be. Thomas Paine wrote to J——n F——s, from New Rochelle, three or four years ago, desiring him to show that letter to De Witt Clinton, in which Mr. Paine gave his opinion of Cheetham, that "*in religion he was a hypocrite, and in politics a John*

Bull ;" that is, an ignorant, conceited, headstrong Englishman, but J——n F——s, who is not a strong-minded man, wrote Mr. Paine an apology for not doing it. He has since expressed his regret that he did not.

The ward meetings have done exceedingly right in posting Cheetham. The people in the country and abroad will now know that he does not belong to the popular Republican party, and that he is an English impostor.

I cannot pay the same compliments to the general administration, nor to the government of the state of New-York. They still continue Cheetham their printer. This gives an appearance that they encourage him in his abuse of France and the French government. Our professed maxim is, "*to live in peace with all nations* ;" but this is an indecent violation of that principle.

T—— P——E.

August 25, 1808.

MEMORIAL TO CONGRESS.

TO THE HONOURABLE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

New-York, January 21, 1808.

THE purport of this address is to state a claim I feel myself entitled to make on the United States, leaving it to their representatives in Congress to decide on its worth and its merits. The case is as follows :—

Towards the latter end of the year 1780, the continental money had become so depreciated, a paper dollar not being more than a cent, that it seemed next to impossible to continue the war.

As the United States were then in alliance with France, it became necessary to make France acquainted with our real situation. I therefore drew up a letter to Count Vergennes, stating undisguisedly the true case, concluding with the request whether France could not either as a subsidy or a loan supply the United States with a million sterling, and continue that supply annually during the war.

I showed the letter to M. Marbois, secretary to the French minister. His remark upon it was, that a million sent out of the nation exhausted it more than ten millions spent in it. I then showed it to Ralph Isard, member of Congress for South Carolina. He borrowed the letter of me, and said, we will endeavour to do something about it in Congress.

Accordingly, Congress appointed Colonel John Laurens, then aid to General Washington, to go to France and make representation of our situation for the purpose of obtaining assistance. Colonel Laurens wished to decline the mission, and that Congress would appoint Colonel Hamilton, which Congress did not choose to do.

Colonel Laurens then came to state the case to me. He

said he was enough acquainted with the military difficulties of the army, but that he was not enough acquainted with political affairs, nor with the resources of the country; but, said he, if you will go with me, I will accept, which I agreed to do, and did do.

We sailed from Boston in the Alliance frigate, Captain Barry, the beginning of February, 1781, and arrived at L'Orient the beginning of March. The aid obtained from France was six million livres as a present, and ten millions as a loan borrowed in Holland on the security of France. We sailed from Brest in the French Resolve frigate the 1st of June, and arrived at Boston the 25th of August, bringing with us two millions and a half in silver, and convoying a ship and a brig laden with clothing and military stores. The money was transported in sixteen ox-teams to the national bank at Philadelphia, which enabled the army to move to York Town to attack, in conjunction with the French army under Rochambeau, the British army under Cornwallis. As I never had a cent for this service, I feel myself entitled, as the country is now in a state of prosperity, to state the case to Congress.

As to my political works, beginning with the pamphlet *Common Sense*, published the beginning of January, 1776, which awakened America to a declaration of independence, as the president and vice-president both know, as they were works done from principle, I cannot dishonour that principle by asking any reward for them. The country has been benefited by them, and I make myself happy in the knowledge of it. It is, however, proper to me to add, that the mere independence of America, were it to have been followed by a system of government modelled after the corrupt system of the English government, it would not have interested me with the unabated ardour it did. It was to bring forward and establish the representative system of government, as the work itself will show, that was the leading principle with me in writing that work, and all my other works, during the progress of the revolution: And I followed the same principle in writing the *Rights of Man* in England.

There is a resolve of the old Congress, while they sat at New-York, of a grant to me of three thousand dollars—the re-

solve is put in handsome language, but it has relation to a matter which it does not express. Elbridge Gerry was chairman of the committee who brought in the resolve. If Congress should judge proper to refer this memorial to a committee, I will inform that committee of the particulars of it.

I have also to state to Congress, that the authority of the old Congress was become so reduced towards the latter end of the war, as to be unable to hold the states together. Congress could do no more than recommend, of which the states frequently took no notice, and when they did, it was never uniformly.

After the failure of the five per cent. duty, recommended by Congress to pay the interest of a loan to be borrowed in Holland, I wrote to Chancellor Livingston, then minister for foreign affairs, and Robert Morris, minister of finance, and proposed a method for getting over the whole difficulty at once, which was by adding a continental legislature to Congress, who should be empowered to make laws for the union, instead of recommending them. As the method proposed met with their full approbation, I held myself in reserve to take the subject up whenever a direct occasion occurred.

In a conversation afterwards with Governor Clinton of New York, now vice-president, it was judged, that for the purpose of my going fully into the subject, and to prevent any misconstruction of my motive or object, it would be best that I received nothing from Congress, but leave it to the states, individually, to make me what acknowledgment they pleased.

The state of New-York made me a present of a farm, which, since my return to America, I have found it necessary to sell;* and the State of Pennsylvania voted me five hundred pounds, their currency. But none of the states to the eastward of New-York, nor to the south of Philadelphia, ever made me the least acknowledgment. They had received benefits from me, which they accepted, and there the matter ended. This story will not tell in history. All the civilized world knows I have been of great service to the United States,

* To Mr. Shute, in 1806, but as Mr. Shute died shortly after, and his widow found it to be an inconvenience, Paine, at her solicitation, took it back.

and have generously given away talents that would have made me a fortune.

I much question if an instance is to be found in ancient or modern times, of a man who had no personal interest in the cause he took up, that of independence and the establishment of the representative system of government, and who sought neither place nor office after it was established, that persevered in the same undeviating principles as I have done for more than thirty years, and that in spite of difficulties, dangers and inconveniences, of which I have had my share.

THOMAS PAINE.

TO CONGRESS.

New-York, Feb. 14, 1808.

CITIZEN REPRESENTATIVES,

IN my memorial to congress of the 21st of January, I spoke of a resolve of the old congress of three thousand dollars to me, and said that the resolve had relation to a matter it did not express; that Elbridge Gerry was chairman of the committee that brought in that resolve, and that if congress referred the memorial to a committee, I would write to that committee, and inform them of the particulars of it. It has relation to my conduct in the affair of Silas Deane and Beaumarchais. The case is as follows :

When I was appointed secretary to the committee for foreign affairs, all the papers of the secret committee, none of which had been seen by congress, came into my hands. I saw by the correspondence of that committee with persons in Europe, particularly with Arthur Lee, that the stores which Silas Deane and Beaumarchais pretended they had purchased, were a present from the court of France, and came out of the king's arsenals. But as this was prior to the alliance, and while the English ambassador (Stormont) was at Paris, the court of France wished it not to be known, and therefore proposed that "a small quantity of tobacco, or some other produce, should be sent to the Cape (Cape Francaise) to give it the air of a mercantile transaction, repeating over and over again, that it was for a cover only, and not for payment, as the whole remittance was gratuitous." See Arthur Lee's letter to the secret committee. See also B. Franklin's.

Knowing these things, and seeing that the public were deceived and imposed upon by the pretensions of Deane, I took the subject up, and published three pieces in Dunlap's

Philadelphia paper, headed with the title of "Common Sense to the Public on Mr. Deane's affairs." John Jay was then President of Congress, Mr. Laurens having resigned in disgust.

After the third piece appeared, I received an order, dated Congress, and signed John Jay, that "Thomas Paine do attend at the bar of this house immediately," which I did.

Mr. Jay took up a newspaper and said, "Here is Mr. Dunlap's paper of December 29. In it is a piece entitled Common Sense to the Public on Mr. Deane's affairs. I am directed by congress to ask you if you are the author." "Yes, sir, I am the author of that piece." Mr. Jay put the same question on the other two pieces, and received the same answer. He then said, you may withdraw.

As soon as I was gone, John Penn, of North Carolina, moved that "Thomas Paine be discharged from the office of secretary to the committee for foreign affairs," and prating Gouverneur Morris seconded the motion, but it was lost when put to the vote, the states being equally divided. I then wrote to congress, requesting a hearing, and Mr. Laurens made a motion for that purpose, which was negatived. The next day I sent in my resignation, saying, that "as I cannot, consistently with my character as a freeman, submit to be censured unheard, therefore, to preserve that character and maintain that right, I think it my duty to resign the office of secretary to the committee for foreign affairs, and I do hereby resign the same,"

After this, I lived as well as I could, hiring myself as a clerk to Owen Biddle, of Philadelphia, till the legislature of Pennsylvania appointed me clerk of the general assembly. But I still went on with my publications on Deane's affairs, till the fraud became so obvious that congress were ashamed of supporting him, and he absconded. He went from Philadelphia to Virginia, and took shipping for France, and got over to England, where he died. Dr. Cutting told me he took poison. Gouverneur Morris, by way of making apology for his conduct in that affair, said to me, after my return from France with Colonel Laurens, "Well! we were all duped, and I among the rest,"

As the salary I had, as secretary to the committee of foreign affairs, was but small, being only 800 dollars a year, and as that had been fretted down by the depreciation to less than a fifth of its nominal value, I wrote to congress, then sitting at New-York, (it was after the war,) to make up the depreciation of my salary, and also for some incidental expenses I had been at. This letter was referred to a committee, of which Elbridge Gerry was chairman.

Mr. Gerry then came to me and said, that the committee had consulted on the subject, and they intended to bring in a handsome report, but that they thought it best not to take any notice of your letter, or make any reference to Deane's affair or your salary. They will indemnify you, said he, without it. The case is, there are some motions on the journals of congress, for censuring you with respect to Deane's affair, which cannot now be recalled, because they have been printed. Therefore, will bring in a report that will supersede them, without mentioning the purport of your letter.

This, citizen representatives, is an explanation of the resolve of the old congress. It was an indemnity to me for some injustice done me, for congress had acted dishonourably to me. However, I prevented Deane's fraudulent demand being paid, and so far the country is obliged to me, but I became the victim of my integrity.

I preferred stating this explanation to the committee, rather than to make it public in my memorial to congress.

THOMAS PAINE.

TO THE HONOURABLE
THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES.

New-York, March 7, 1808.

SIR,

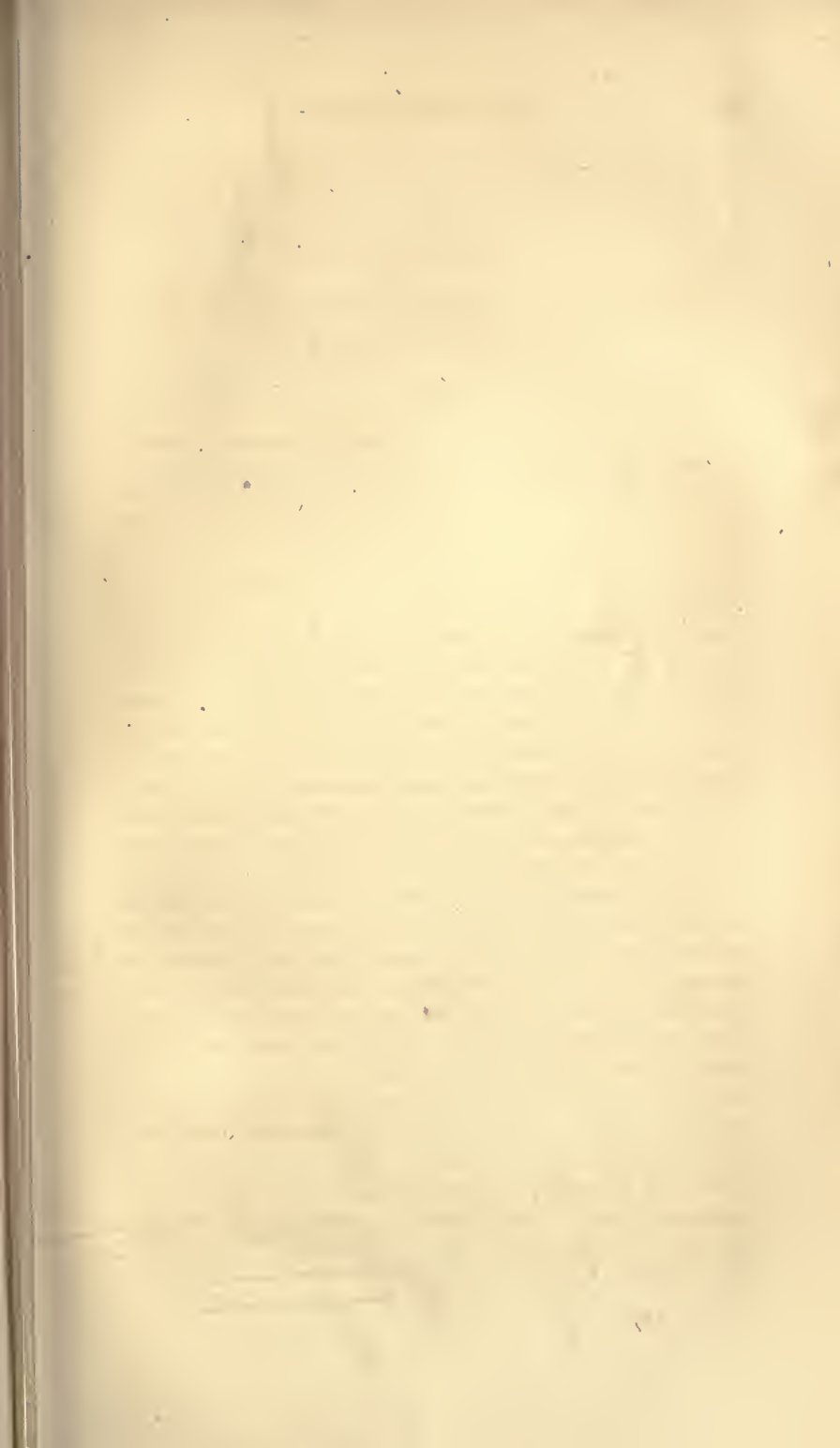
I KNOW not who the committee of claims are, but if they were men of younger standing than "*the times that tried men's souls*," and consequently too young to know what the condition of the country was at the time I published *Common Sense*, for I do not believe independence would have been declared had it not been for the effect of that work, they are not capable of judging of the whole of the services of Thomas Paine. The president and vice-president can give you information on those subjects, so also can Mr. Smilie, who was a member of the Pennsylvania legislature at the times I am speaking of. He knows the inconveniences I was often put to, for the old congress treated me with ingratitude. They seemed to be disgusted at my popularity, and acted towards me as a rival instead of a friend.

The explanation I sent to the committee, respecting a resolve of the old congress while they sat at New-York, should be known to congress, but it seems to me that the committee keep every thing to themselves and do nothing. If my memorial was referred to the committee of claims for the purpose of losing it, it is unmanly policy. After so many years of service, my heart grows cold towards America.

Yours, in friendship,

THOMAS PAINE.

P. S. I repeat my request that you would call on the committee of claims to bring in their report, and that congress would decide upon it.





LETTER

TO

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

Paris, August 3, 1796.

As censure is but awkwardly softened by apology, I shall offer you no apology for this letter. The eventful crisis to which your double politics have conducted the affairs of your country, requires an investigation uncramped by ceremony.

There was a time when the fame of America, moral and political, stood fair and high in the world. The lustre of her revolution extended itself to every individual, and to be a citizen of America gave a title to respect in Europe. Neither meanness nor ingratitude had been mingled in the composition of her character. Her resistance to the attempted tyranny of England left her unsuspected of the one, and her open acknowledgment of the aid she received from France precluded all suspicion of the other. The politics of Washington had not then appeared.

At the time I left America (April 1787) the Continental Convention, that formed the federal constitution, was on the point of meeting. Since that time new schemes of politics, and new distinctions of parties, have arisen. The term *Anti-federalist* has been applied to all those who combated the defects of that constitution, or opposed the measures of your administration. It was only to the absolute necessity of establishing some federal authority, extending equally over all the States, that an instrument so inconsistent as the present federal constitution is, obtained a suffrage. I would have voted for it myself, had I been in America, or even for a worse rather than

have had none, provided it contained the means of remedying its defects by the same appeal to the people, by which it was to be established. It is always better policy to leave removeable errors to expose themselves, than to hazard too much in contending against them theoretically.

I have introduced these observations, not only to mark the general difference between Anti-federalist and Anti-constitutionalist, but to preclude the effect, and even the application, of the former of these terms to myself. I declare myself opposed to several matters in the constitution, particularly to the manner in which what is called the executive is formed, and to the long duration of the senate; and if I live to return to America, I will use all my endeavors to have them altered. I also declare myself opposed to almost the whole of your administration; for I know it to have been deceitful, if not perfidious, as I shall show in the course of this letter. But as to the point of consolidating the States into a Federal Government, it so happens, that the proposition for that purpose came originally from myself. I proposed it in a letter to Chancellor Livingston in the spring of the year 1782, while that gentleman was minister for foreign affairs. The five per cent. duty recommended by Congress had then fallen through, having been adopted by some of the States, altered by others, rejected by Rhode Island, and repealed by Virginia, after it had been consented to. The proposal in the letter I allude to, was to get over the whole difficulty at once, by annexing a continental legislative body to Congress; for in order to have any law of the Union uniform, the case could only be, that either Congress, as it then stood, must frame the law, and the States severally adopt it without alteration, or, the States must erect a continental legislature for the purpose. Chancellor Livingston, Robert Morris, Gouverneur Morris, and myself, had a meeting at the house of Robert Morris on the subject of that letter. There was no diversity of opinion on the proposition for a continental legislature: the only difficulty was on the manner of bringing the proposition forward. For my own part, as I considered it as a remedy in reserve, that could be applied at any time *when the States saw themselves wrong enough to be put right*, (which did not appear to be the case at that time,) I did not see the propriety of urging it precipitately, and declined being the publisher of it myself. After this account of a fact, the leaders of your party will scarcely have the hardiness to apply to me the term of Anti-federalist. But I can go to a date and to a

fact beyond this, for the proposition for electing a continental convention. To form the Continental Government, is one of the subjects treated of in the pamphlet *Common Sense*.

Having thus cleared away a little of the rubbish that might otherwise have lain in my way, I return to the point of time at which the present federal constitution and your administration began. It was very well said by an anonymous writer in Philadelphia, about a year before that period, that "*thirteen staves and never a hoop will not make a barrel*, and as any kind of hooping the barrel, however defectively executed, would be better than none, it was scarcely possible but that considerable advantages must arise from the federal hooping of the States. It was with pleasure that every sincere friend to America beheld as the natural effect of union, her rising prosperity, and it was with grief they saw that prosperity mixed, even in the blossom, with the germ of corruption. Monopolies of every kind marked your administration almost in the moment of its commencement. The lands obtained by the revolution were lavished upon partizans; the interest of the disbanded soldier was sold to the speculator; injustice was acted under the pretence of faith; and the chief of the army became the patron of the fraud. From such a beginning what else could be expected, than what has happened? A mean and servile submission to the insults of one nation; treachery and ingratitude to another.

Some vices make their approach with such a splendid appearance, that we scarcely know to what class of moral distinctions they belong. They are rather virtues corrupted than vices originally. But meanness and ingratitude have nothing equivocal in their character. There is not a trait in them that renders them doubtful. They are so originally vice, that they are generated in the dung of other vices, and crawl into existence with the filth upon their backs. The fugitives have found protection in you, and the levee-room is their place of rendezvous.

As the federal constitution is a copy, though not quite so base as the original, of the form of the British Government, an imitation of its vices was naturally to be expected. So intimate is the connection between *form* and *practice*, that to adopt the one is to invite the other. Imitation is naturally progressive, and is rapidly so in matters that are vicious.

Soon after the federal constitution arrived in England, I received a letter from a female literary correspondent (a native of New

York) very well mixed with friendship, sentiment, and politics. In my answer to that letter, I permitted myself to ramble into the wilderness of imagination, and to anticipate what might hereafter be the condition of America. I had no idea that the picture I then drew was realizing so fast, and still less that Mr. Washington was hurrying it on. As the extract I allude to is congenial with the subject I am upon, I here transcribe it:

"You touch me on a very tender point, when you say, *that my friends on your side the water cannot be reconciled to the idea of my abandoning America even for my native England.* They are right. I had rather see my horse, Button, eating the grass of Bordentown or Morrissania, than see all the pomp and show of Europe.

"A thousand years hence, for I must indulge a few thoughts, perhaps in less, America may be what England now is. The innocence of her character, that won the hearts of all nations in her favor, may sound like a romance, and her inimitable virtue as if it had never been. The ruins of that liberty, which thousands bled to obtain, may just furnish materials for a village tale, or extort a sigh from rustic sensibility; while the fashionable of that day, enveloped in dissipation, shall deride the principle, and deny the fact.

"When we contemplate the fall of empires, and the extinction of the nations of the ancient world, we see but little more to excite our regret than the mouldering ruins of pompous palaces, magnificent monuments, lofty pyramids, and walls and towers of the most costly workmanship: but when the empire of America shall fall, the subject for contemplative sorrow will be infinitely greater than crumbling brass or marble can inspire. It will not then be said, Here stood a temple of vast antiquity, here rose a Babel of invisible height, or there a palace of sumptuous extravagance; but, here, ah painful thought! the noblest work of human wisdom, the greatest scene of human glory, the fair cause of freedom, rose and fell: Read this, and then ask if I forget America."

Impressed, as I was, with apprehensions of this kind, I had America constantly in my mind in all the publications I afterwards made. The First, and still more the Second, Part of the *Rights of Man*, bear evident marks of this watchfulness; and the *Dissertation on First Principles of Government* goes more directly to the point than either of the former. I now pass on to other subjects.

It will be supposed by those into whose hands this letter may fall, that I have some personal resentment against you; and I will therefore settle this point before I proceed further.

If I have any resentment, you must acknowledge that I have not been hasty in declaring it, neither would it now be declared (for what are private resentments to the public?) if the cause of it did not unite itself as well with your public as with your private character, and with the motives of your political conduct.

The part I acted in the American revolution is well known. I shall not here repeat it. I know, also, that, had it not been for the aid received from France, in men, money, and ships, your cold and unmilitary conduct (as I shall show in the course of this letter) would in all probability have lost America; at least she would not have been the independent nation she now is. You slept away your time in the field, till the finances of the country were completely exhausted, and you have but little share in the glory of the final event. It is time, sir, to speak the undisguised language of historical truth.

Elevated to the chair of the presidency, you assumed the merit of every thing to yourself; and the natural ingratitude of your constitution began to appear. You commenced your presidential career by encouraging and swallowing the grossest adulation; and you travelled America from one end to the other to put yourself in the way of receiving it. You have as many addresses in your chest as James the Second. As to what were your views, for if you are not great enough to have ambition you are little enough to have vanity, they cannot be directly inferred from expressions of your own; but the partizans of your politics have divulged the secret.

John Adams has said, (and John it is known was always a speller after places and offices, and never thought his little services were highly enough paid,)—John has said, that as Mr. Washington had no child, the presidency should be made hereditary in the family of Lund Washington. John might then have counted upon some sinecure for himself, and a provision for his descendants. He did not go so far as to say, also, that the vice presidency should be hereditary in the family of John Adams. He prudently left that to stand on the ground, that one good turn deserves another.*

* Two persons to whom John Adams said this, told me of it. The secretary of Mr. Jay was present when it was told to me.

John Adams is one of those men who never contemplated the origin of government, or comprehended any thing of first principles. If he had, he might have seen, that the right to set up and establish hereditary government, never did, and never can, exist in any generation at any time whatever; that it is of the nature of treason, because it is an attempt to take away the rights of all the minors living at that time, and of all succeeding generations. It is of a degree beyond common treason; it is a sin against nature. The equal rights of every generation is a fixed right in the nature of things; it belongs to the son when of age, as it belonged to the father before him. John Adams would himself deny the right that any former deceased generation could have to decree authoritatively a succession of governors over him or over his children, and yet he assumes a pretended right, treasonable as it is, of acting it himself. His ignorance is his best excuse.

John Jay has said, (and this John was always the sycophant of every thing in power, from Mr. Girard in America, to Grenville in England,)—John Jay has said, that the senate should have been appointed for life. He would then have been sure of never wanting a lucrative appointment for himself, and have had no fears about impeachment. These are the disguised traitors that call themselves federalists.*

Could I have known to what degree of corruption and perfidy the administrative part of the government of America had descended, I could have been at no loss to have understood the reservedness of Mr. Washington towards me during my imprisonment in the Luxembourg. There are cases in which silence is a loud language. I will here explain the cause of that imprisonment, and return to Mr. Washington afterwards.

In the course of that rage, terror, and suspicion, which the brutal letter of the Duke of Brunswick first started into existence in France, it happened that almost every man who was opposed to violence, or who was not violent himself, became suspected. I had constantly been opposed to every thing which was of the nature or of the appearance of violence; but as I had always done it in a manner that showed it to be a principle founded in my heart, and not a political manœuvre, it precluded the pretence of accusing me. I was reached, however, under another pretence.

* If Mr. John Jay desires to know on what authority I say this, I will give that authority publicly when he chooses to call for it.

A decree was passed to imprison all persons born in England; but as I was a member of the Convention, and had been complimented with the honorary style of citizen of France, as Mr. Washington and some other Americans have been, this decree fell short of reaching me. A motion was afterwards made and carried, supported chiefly by Bourdon de l'Oise, for expelling foreigners from the Convention. My expulsion being thus effected, the two committees of public safety and of general surety, of which Robespierre was the dictator, put me in arrestation under the former decree for imprisoning persons born in England. Having thus shown under what pretence the imprisonment was effected, I come to speak of such parts of the case as apply between me and Mr. Washington, either as a president, or as an individual.

I have always considered that a foreigner, such as I was in fact, with respect to France, might be a member of a convention for framing a constitution, without affecting his right of citizenship, in the country to which he belongs, but not a member of a government after a constitution is formed; and I have uniformly acted upon this distinction. To be a member of a government requires a person being in allegiance with that government and to the country locally. But a constitution, being a thing of principle, and not of action, and which, after it is formed, is to be referred to the people for their approbation or rejection, does not require allegiance in the persons forming and proposing it; and besides this, it is only to the thing after it is formed and established, and to the country after its governmental character is fixed by the adoption of a constitution, that the allegiance can be given. No oath of allegiance or of citizenship was required of the members who composed the Convention: there was nothing existing in form to swear allegiance to. If any such condition had been required, I could not, as a citizen of America, in fact, though citizen of France by compliment, have accepted a seat in the Convention.

As my citizenship in America was not altered or diminished by any thing I had done in Europe, (on the contrary, it ought to have been considered as strengthened, for it was the American principle of government that I was endeavoring to spread in Europe,) and as it is the duty of every government to charge itself with the care of any of its citizens who may happen to fall under an arbitrary persecution abroad, (and this is also one of the reasons for which ambassadors or ministers are appointed,) it was the duty of the ex-

ecutive department in America, to have made, at least, some enquiries about me, as soon as it heard of my imprisonment. But if this had not been the case, that government owed it to me on every ground and principle of honor and gratitude. Mr. Washington owed it to me on every score of private acquaintance, I will not now say friendship; for it has some time been known by those who know him, that he has no friendships, that he is incapable of forming any; he can serve or desert a man, or a cause, with constitutional indifference; and it is this cold hermaphrodite faculty that imposed itself upon the world, and was credited awhile by enemies, as by friends, for prudence, moderation, and impartiality.

Soon after I was put into arrestation, and imprisonment in the Luxembourg, the Americans who were then in Paris, went in a body to the bar of the Convention to reclaim me. They were answered by the then President Vadier, who has since absconded, that *I was born in England*, and it was signified to them, by some of the Committee of General Surety, to whom they were referred, (I have been told it was Billaud Varennes,) that their reclamation of me was only the act of individuals, without any authority from the American government.

A few days after this, all communication between persons imprisoned, and any person without the prison, was cut off by an order of the police. I neither saw nor heard from any body for six months; and the only hope that remained to me was, that a new minister would arrive from America to supercede Morris, and that he would be authorized to inquire into the cause of my imprisonment; but even this hope, in the state to which matters were daily arriving, was too remote to have any consolatory effect, and I contented myself with the thought that I might be remembered when it would be too late. There is, perhaps, no condition from which a man, conscious of his own uprightness, cannot derive consolation; for it is in itself a consolation for him to find, that he can bear that condition with calmness and fortitude.

From about the middle of March (1794) to the fall of Robespierre July 29, (9th of Thermidor,) the state of things in the prisons was a continued scene of horror. No man could count upon life for twenty-four hours. To such a pitch of rage and suspicion were Robespierre and his committee arrived, that it seemed as if they feared to leave a man to live. Scarcely a night passed in which ten, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, or more, were not taken out of the prison, carri

ed before a pretended tribunal in the morning, and guillotined before night. One hundred and sixty-nine were taken out of the Luxembourg one night, in the month of July, and one hundred and sixty of them guillotined. A list of two hundred more, according to the report in the prison, was preparing a few days before Robespierre fell. In this last list I have good reason to believe I was included. A memorandum in the hand-writing of Robespierre was afterwards produced in the Convention, by the committee to whom the papers of Robespierre were referred, in these words :

<p>“ Demander que Thomas Paine “ soit decreté d’accusation pour “ l’interet de l’Amerique, au- “ tant que de la France.”</p>	<p>“ Demand that Thomas Paine “ be decreed of accusation for “ the interest of America as “ well as of France.”</p>
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I had been imprisoned seven months, and the silence of the executive part of the government of America (Mr. Washington) upon the case, and upon every thing respecting me, was explanation enough to Robespierre that he might proceed to extremities.

A violent fever which had nearly terminated my existence, was, I believe, the circumstance that preserved it. I was not in a condition to be removed, or to know of what was passing, or of what had passed, for more than a month. It makes a blank in my remembrance of life. The first thing I was informed of was the fall of Robespierre.

About a week after this, Mr. Monroe arrived to supercede Gouverneur Morris, and as soon as I was able to write a note legible enough to be read, I found a way to convey one to him by means of the man who lighted the lamps in the prison; and whose unabated friendship to me, from whom he had never received any service, and with difficulty accepted any recompense, puts the character of Mr. Washington to shame.

In a few days I received a message from Mr. Monroe, conveyed to me in a note from an intermediate person, with assurance of his friendship, and expressing a desire that I would rest the case in his hands. After a fortnight or more had passed, and hearing nothing farther, I wrote to a friend who was then in Paris, a citizen of Philadelphia, requesting him to inform me what was the true situation of things with respect to me. I was sure that something was the matter; I began to have hard thoughts of Mr. Washington, but I was unwilling to encourage them.

In about ten days, I received an answer to my letter, in which

the writer says, "Mr. Monroe has told me that he has no order" (meaning from the president, Mr. Washington) respecting you, "but that he (Mr. Monroe) will do every thing in his power to liberate you; but, from what I learn from the Americans lately arrived in Paris, you are not considered, either by the American government, or by individuals, as an American citizen."

I was now at no loss to understand Mr. Washington and his new fangled faction, and that their policy was silently to leave me to fall in France. They were rushing as fast as they could venture, without awakening the jealousy of America, into all the vices and corruptions of the British government; and it was no more consistent with the policy of Mr. Washington, and those who immediately surrounded him, than it was with that of Robespierre or of Pitt, that I should survive. They have, however, missed the mark, and the reaction is upon themselves.

Upon the receipt of the letter just alluded to, I sent a memorial to Mr. Monroe, which the reader will find in the appendix, and I received from him the following answer. It is dated the 18th of September, but did not come to hand till about the 18th of October. I was then falling into a relapse, the weather was becoming damp and cold, fuel was not to be had, and the abscess in my side, the consequence of those things, and of want of air and exercise, was beginning to form, and has continued immoveable ever since. Here follows Mr. Monroe's letter.

Paris, September 18th, 1794.

"DEAR SIR,

"I was favored, soon after my arrival here, with several letters from you, and more latterly with one in the character of a memorial upon the subject of your confinement; and should have answered them at the times they were respectively written, had I not concluded you would have calculated with certainty upon the deep interest I take in your welfare, and the pleasure with which I shall embrace every opportunity in my power to serve you. I should still pursue the same course, and for reasons which must obviously occur, if I did not find that you are disquieted with apprehensions upon interesting points, and which justice to you and our country equally forbid you should entertain. You mention that you have been informed you are not considered as an American citizen by the Americans, and that you have likewise heard that I had no instructions

respecting you by the government. I doubt not the person who gave you the information meant well, but I suspect he did not even convey accurately his own ideas on the first point: for I presume the most he could say is, that you had likewise become a French citizen, and which by no means deprived you of being an American one. Even this, however, may be doubted, I mean the acquisition of citizenship in France, and I confess you have said much to show that it has not been made. I really suspect that this was all that the gentleman who wrote to you, and those Americans he heard speak upon the subject, meant. It becomes my duty, however, to declare to you, that I consider you as an American citizen, and that you are considered universally in that character by the people of America. As such you are entitled to my attention; and so far as it can be given consistently with those obligations which are mutual between every government and even a transient passenger you shall, receive it.

“The Congress have never decided upon the subject of citizenship, in a manner to regard the present case. By being with us through the revolution, you are of our country as absolutely as if you had been born there, and you are no more of England, than every native American is. This is the true doctrine in the present case, so far as it becomes complicated with any other consideration. I have mentioned it to make you easy upon the only point which could give you any disquietude.

“It is necessary for me to tell you how much all your countrymen, I speak of the great mass of the people, are interested in your welfare. They have not forgotten the history of their own revolution, and the difficult scenes through which they passed; nor do they review its several stages without reviving in their bosoms a due sensibility of the merits of those who served them in that great and arduous conflict. The crime of ingratitude has not yet stained, and I trust never will stain, our national character. You are considered by them, as not only having rendered important services in our own revolution, but as being, on a more extensive scale, the friend of human rights, and a distinguished and able advocate in favor of public liberty. To the welfare of Thomas Paine, the Americans are not, nor can they be, indifferent.

“Of the sense which the President has always entertained of your merits, and of his friendly disposition towards you, you are too well assured, to require any declaration of it from me. That I for-

ward his wishes in seeking your safety is what I well know ; and this will form an additional obligation on me to perform what I should otherwise consider as a duty.

“ You are, in my opinion, at present menaced by no kind of danger. To liberate you, will be an object of my endeavors, and as soon as possible. But you must, until that event shall be accomplished, bear your situation with patience and fortitude ; you will likewise have the justice to recollect, that I am placed here upon a difficult theatre,* many important objects to attend to, and with few to consult. It becomes me in pursuit of those, to regulate my conduct in respect to each, as to the manner and the time, as will, in my judgment, be best calculated to accomplish the whole.

“ With great esteem and respect consider me personally your friend,

“ JAMES MONROE.”

The part in Mr. Monroe's letter, in which he speaks of the President, (Mr. Washington,) is put in soft language. Mr. Monroe knew what Mr. Washington had said formerly, and he was willing to keep that in view. But the fact is, not only that Mr. Washington had given no orders to Mr. Monroe as the letter stated ; but he did not so much as say to him, inquire if Mr. Paine be dead or alive, in prison or out, or see if there be any assistance we can give him.

While these matters were passing, the liberations from the prisons were numerous ; from twenty to forty in the course of almost every twenty-four hours. The continuance of my imprisonment after a new minister had arrived immediately from America, which was now more than two months, was a matter so obviously strange, that I found the character of the American government spoken of in very unqualified terms of reproach ; not only by those who still remained in prison, but by those who were liberated, and by persons who had access to the prison from without. Under these circumstances I wrote again to Mr. Monroe, and found occasion to say, among other things, “ It will not add to the popularity of Mr. Washington, to have it believed in America, as it is believed here, that “ he connives at my imprisonment.”

The case, so far as it respected Mr. Monroe, was, that having to get over the difficulties, which the strange conduct of Gouverneur

* This I presume alludes to the embarrassments which the strange conduct of Gouverneur Morris had occasioned, and which, I well know, had created suspicions of the sincerity of Mr. Washington.

Morris had thrown in the way of a successor, and having no authority from the American government, to speak officially upon any thing relating to me, he found himself obliged to proceed by unofficial means with individual members ; for though Robespierre was overthrown, the Robespierrian members of the Committee of Public Safety still remained in considerable force, and had they found out that Mr. Monroe had no official authority upon the case, they would have paid little or no regard to his reclamation of me. In the mean time my health was suffering exceedingly, the dreary prospect of winter was coming on, and imprisonment was still a thing of danger. After the Robespierrian members of the Committee were removed, by the expiration of their time of serving, Mr. Monroe reclaimed me, and I was liberated the 4th of November. Mr. Monroe arrived in Paris the beginning of August before. All that period of my imprisonment, at least, I owe not to Robespierre, but to his colleague in projects, George Washington. Immediately upon my liberation, Mr. Monroe invited me to his house, where I remained more than a year and a half ; and I speak of his aid and friendship, as an open-hearted man will always do in such a case, with respect and gratitude.

Soon after my liberation, the Convention passed a unanimous vote, to invite me to return to my seat among them. The times were still unsettled and dangerous, as well from without as within, for the coalition was unbroken, and the constitution not settled. I chose, however, to accept the invitation : for as I undertake nothing but what I believe to be right, I abandon nothing that I undertake ; and I was willing also to show, that, as I was not of a cast of mind to be deterred by prospects, or retrospects, of danger, so neither were my principles to be weakened by misfortune or perverted by disgust.

Being now once more abroad in the world, I began to find that I was not the only one who had conceived an unfavorable opinion of Mr. Washington ; it was evident that his character was on the decline as well among Americans, as among foreigners of different nations. From being the chief of the government, he had made himself the chief of a party ; and his integrity was questioned, for his politics had a doubtful appearance. The mission of Mr. Jay, to London, notwithstanding there was an American minister there already, had then taken place, and was beginning to be talked of. It appeared to others, as it did to me, to be enveloped in mystery, which every day served either to increase or to explain into matter of suspicion.

In the year 1790, or about that time, Mr. Washington, as president, had sent Gouverneur Morris to London, as his secret agent, to have some communication with the British ministry. To cover the agency of Morris it was given out, I know not by whom, that he went as an agent from Robert Morris, to borrow money in Europe, and the report was permitted to pass uncontradicted. The event of Morris's negociation was, that Mr. Hammond was sent minister from England to America, Pinkney from America to England, and himself minister to France. If, while Morris was minister in France, he was not an emissary of the British ministry and the coalesced powers, he gave strong reason to suspect him of it. No one who saw his conduct, and heard his conversation, could doubt his being in their interest; and had he not got off at the time he did, after his recall, he would have been in arrestation. Some letters of his had fallen into the hands of the Committee of Public Safety, and enquiry was making after him.

A great bustle has been made by Mr. Washington about the conduct of Genet in America, while that of his own minister, Morris, in France, was infinitely more reproachable. If Genet was imprudent or rash, he was not treacherous; but Morris was all three. He was the enemy of the French revolution, in every stage of it. But notwithstanding this conduct on the part of Morris, and the known profligacy of his character, Mr. Washington, in a letter he wrote to him at the time of recalling him on the complaint and request of the Committee of Public Safety, assures him, that though he had complied with that request, he still retained the same esteem and friendship for him as before. This letter, Morris was foolish enough to tell of; and, as his own character and conduct were notorious, the telling of it could have but one effect, which was that of implicating the character of the writer. Morris still loiters in Europe, chiefly in England; and Mr. Washington is still in correspondence with him. Mr. Washington ought, therefore, to expect, especially since his conduct in the affairs of Jay's treaty, that France must consider Morris and Washington as men of the same description. The chief difference, however, between the two is, (for in politics there is none,) that the one is profligate enough to profess an indifference about moral principles, and the other is prudent enough to conceal the want of them.

About three months after I was at liberty, the official note of Jay to Grenville, on the subject of the capture of American vessels by

the British cruisers, appeared in the American papers that arrived at Paris. Every thing was of a piece—every thing was mean. The same kind of character went to all circumstances public or private. Disgusted at this national degradation, as well as at the particular conduct of Mr. Washington to me, I wrote to him (Mr. Washington) on the twenty-second of February, 1795, under cover to the then secretary of state, (Mr. Randolph,) and entrusted the letter to Mr. Letombe, who was appointed French consul to Philadelphia, and was on the point of taking his departure. When I supposed Mr. Letombe had sailed, I mentioned the letter to Mr. Monroe, and as I was then in his house, I showed it to him. He expressed a wish that I would recall it, which he supposed might be done, as he had learned that Mr. Letombe had not then sailed. I agreed to do so, and it was returned by Mr. Letombe under cover to Mr. Monroe. The letter, will, however; now reach Mr. Washington publicly in the course of this work.

About the month of September following, I had a severe relapse, which gave occasion to the report of my death. I had felt it coming on a considerable time before, which occasioned me to hasten the work I had then on hand, *The Second Part of the Age of Reason*. When I had finished the work, I bestowed another letter on Mr. Washington, which I sent under cover to Mr. Franklin Bache, of Philadelphia. The letter was as follows :

“TO GEORGE WASHINGTON,

“PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

“*Paris, September 20, 1795.*

“SIR,

“I had written you a letter by Mr. Letombe, French consul, but, at the request of Mr. Monroe, I withdrew it, and the letter is still by me. I was the more easily prevailed upon to do this, as it was then my intention to have returned to America the latter end of the present year (1795;) but the illness I now suffer prevents me. In case I had come, I should have applied to you for such parts of your official letters (and your private ones, if you had chosen to give them) as contained any instructions or directions either to Mr. Monroe, to Mr. Morris, or to any other person, respecting me; for after you were informed of my imprisonment in France, it was incumbent on you to have made some enquiry into the cause, as you might very well conclude that I had not the opportunity of

informing you of it. I cannot understand your silence upon this subject upon any other ground, than as connivance at my imprisonment; and this is the manner it is understood here, and will be understood in America, unless you will give me authority for contradicting it. I therefore write you this letter, to propose to you to send me copies of any letters you have written, that I may remove this suspicion. In the preface to the Second Part of the *Age of Reason*, I have given a memorandum from the hand-writing of Robespierre, in which he proposed a degree of accusation against me, "*for the interest of America as well as of France.*" He could have no cause for putting America in the case, but by interpreting the silence of the American government into connivance and consent. I was imprisoned on the ground of being born in England; and your silence in not enquiring the cause of that imprisonment, and reclaiming me against it, was tacitly giving me up. I ought not to have suspected you of treachery; but whether I recover from the illness I now suffer, or not, I shall continue to think you treacherous, till you give me cause to think otherwise. I am sure you would have found yourself more at your ease, had you acted by me as you ought; for whether your desertion of me was intended to gratify the English government, or to let me fall into destruction in France, that you might exclaim the louder against the French revolution; or whether you hoped by my extinction to meet with less opposition in mounting up the American government; either of these will involve you in reproach you will not easily shake off.

"THOMAS PAINE."

Here follows the letter above alluded to, which had been withdrawn:

"TO GEORGE WASHINGTON,

"PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

"*Paris, February 22, 1795.*

"SIR,

"As it is always painful to reproach those one would wish to respect, it is not without some difficulty that I have taken the resolution to write to you. The danger to which I have been exposed cannot have been unknown to you, and the guarded silence you have observed upon that circumstance, is what I ought not to have

expected from you, either as a friend or as President of the United States.

“You knew enough of my character, to be assured that I could not have deserved imprisonment in France; and, without knowing any thing more than this, you had sufficient ground to have taken some interest for my safety. Every motive arising from recollection ought to have suggested to you the consistency of such a measure. But I cannot find that you have so much as directed an enquiry to be made whether I was in prison or at liberty, dead or alive; what the cause of that imprisonment was, or whether there was any service or assistance you could render. Is this what I ought to have expected from America, after the part I have acted towards her? Or will it redound to her honor or to your’s that I tell the story? I do not hesitate to say, that you have not served America with more fidelity, or greater zeal, or more disinterestedness, than myself, and perhaps not with better effect. After the revolution of America had been established, you rested at home to partake its advantages, and I ventured into new scenes of difficulty to extend the principles which that revolution had produced. In the progress of events, you beheld yourself a president in America, and me a prisoner in France; you folded your arms, forgot your friend, and became silent.

“As every thing I have been doing in Europe was connected with my wishes for the prosperity of America, I ought to be the more surprised at this conduct on the part of her government. It leaves me but one mode of explanation, which is, *that every thing is not as it ought to be amongst you*, and that the presence of a man who might disapprove, and who had credit enough with the country to be heard and believed, was not wished for. This was the operating motive with the despotic faction that imprisoned me in France, (though the pretence was, that I was a foreigner,) and those that have been silent and inactive towards me in America, appear to me to have acted from the same motive. It is impossible for me to discover any other.

“After the part I have taken in the revolution of America, it is natural that I feel interested in whatever relates to her character and prosperity. Though I am not on the spot to see what is immediately acting there, I see some part of what she is acting in Europe. For your own sake, as well as for that of America, I was both surprised and concerned at the appointment of Gouverneur

Morris, to be Minister to France. His conduct has proved, that the opinion I had formed of that appointment was well founded. I wrote that opinion to Mr. Jefferson at the time, and I was frank enough to say the same thing to Morris, that *it was an unfortunate appointment*. His prating, insignificant pomposity rendered him at once offensive, suspected, and ridiculous; and his total neglect of all business, had so disgusted the Americans, that they proposed drawing up a protest against him. He carried this neglect to such an extreme, that it was necessary to inform him of it; and I asked him one day, *if he did not feel himself ashamed to take the money of the country, and do nothing for it?* But Morris is so fond of profit and voluptuousness, that he cares nothing about character. Had he not been removed at the time he was, I think his conduct would have precipitated the two countries into a rupture; and in this case, hated *systematically* as America is, and ever will be, by the British government, and at the same time suspected by France, the commerce of America would have fallen a prey to both.

If the inconsistent conduct of Morris exposed the interest of America to some hazard in France, the pusillanimous conduct of Mr. Jay in England has rendered the American government contemptible in Europe. Is it possible that any man, who has contributed to the independence of America, and to free her from the tyranny and injustice of the British government, can read without shame and indignation the note of Jay to Grenville? It is a satire upon the Declaration of Independence, and an encouragement to the British government to treat America with contempt. At the time this minister of petitions was acting this miserable part, he had every means in his hands to enable him to have done his business as he ought. The success or failure of his mission depended upon the success or failure of the French arms. Had France failed, Mr. Jay might have put his humble petition in his pocket, and gone home. The case happened to be otherwise, and he has sacrificed the honor, and perhaps the advantage of it, by turning petitioner. I take it for granted, that he was sent over to demand indemnification for the captured property; and, in this case, if he thought he wanted a preamble to his demand, he might have said, "That, though the government of England might suppose itself under the necessity of seizing American property bound to France, yet that supposed necessity could not preclude indemnification to the proprietors, who, acting under the authority of

“their own government, were not accountable to any other.” But Mr. Jay sets out with an implied recognition of the right of the British government to seize and condemn: for he enters his complaint against the *irregularity* of the seizures, and the condemnation, as if they were reprehensible only by not being conformable to the terms of the proclamation under which they were seized. Instead of being the envoy of a government, he goes over like a lawyer to demand a new trial. I can hardly help thinking that Grenville wrote that note himself, and Jay signed it; for the style of it is domestic and not diplomatic. The term, *his Majesty*, used without any descriptive epithet, always signifies the King whom the minister represents. If this sinking of the demand into a petition was a juggle between Grenville and Jay to cover the indemnification, I think it will end in another juggle, that of never paying the money; and be made use of afterwards to preclude the right of demanding it: for Mr. Jay has virtually disowned the right by appealing to the *magnanimity of his Majesty against the capturers*. He has made this magnanimous Majesty the umpire in the case, and the government of the United States must abide by the decision. If, Sir, I turn some part of this business into ridicule, it is to avoid the unpleasant sensation of serious indignation.

“Among other things which I confess I do not understand, is your proclamation of neutrality. This has always appeared to me as an assumption on the part of the executive. But passing this over, as a disputable case, and considering it only as political, the consequence has been that of sustaining the losses of war, without the balance of reprisals. When the profession of neutrality, on the part of America, was answered by hostilities on the part of Britain, the object and intention of that neutrality existed no longer; and to maintain it after this, was not only to encourage farther insults and depredations, but was an informal breach of neutrality towards France, by passively contributing to the aid of her enemy. That the government of England considered the American government as pusillanimous, is evident from the increasing insolence of the conduct of the former towards the latter, till the affair of General Wayne. She then saw that it might be possible to kick a government into some degree of spirit. So far as the proclamation of neutrality was intended to prevent a dissolute spirit of privateering in America under foreign colors, it was undoubtedly laudable; but to continue it as a government neutrality, after the commerce

of America was made war upon, was submission and not neutrality. I have heard so much about this thing called neutrality, that I know not if the ungenerous and dishonorable silence (for I must call it such,) that has been observed by your part of the government towards me, during my imprisonment, has not in some measure arisen from that policy.

"Though I have written you this letter, you ought not to suppose it has been an agreeable undertaking to me. On the contrary, I assure you, it has caused me some disquietude. I am sorry you have given me cause to do it; for, as I have always remembered your former friendship with pleasure, I suffer a loss by your depriving me of that sentiment.

"THOMAS PAINE."

That this letter was not written in very good temper, is very evident; but it was just such a letter as his conduct appeared to me to merit, and every thing on his part since has served to confirm that opinion. Had I wanted a commentary on his silence, with respect to my imprisonment in France, some of his faction have furnished me with it. What I here allude to, is a publication in a Philadelphia paper, copied afterwards into a New York paper, both under the patronage of the Washington faction, in which the writer, still supposing me in prison in France, wonders at my lengthy respite from the scaffold. And he marks his politics still farther, by saying, "It appears, moreover, that the people of England did not relish his (Thomas Paine's) opinions quite so well as he expected; and that for one of his last pieces, as destructive to the peace and happiness of their country, (meaning, I suppose, the *Rights of Man*,) they threatened our knight errant with such serious vengeance, that, to avoid a trip to Botany Bay, he fled over to France, as a less dangerous voyage."

I am not refuting or contradicting the falsehood of this publication, for it is sufficiently notorious; neither am I censuring the writer: on the contrary, I thank him for the explanation he has incautiously given of the principles of the Washington faction. Insignificant, however, as the piece is, it was capable of having some ill effects, had it arrived in France during my imprisonment, and in the time of Robespierre; and I am not uncharitable in supposing that this was one of the intentions of the writer.*

* I know not who the writer of the piece is, but some of the Americans

I have now done with Mr. Washington on the score of private affairs. It would have been far more agreeable to me had his conduct been such as not to have merited these reproaches. Errors, or caprices of the temper, can be pardoned and forgotten ; but a cold, deliberate crime of the heart, such as Mr. Washington is capable of acting, is not to be washed away. I now proceed to other matter.

After Jay's note to Grenville arrived in Paris from America, the character of every thing that was to follow might be easily foreseen ; and it was upon this anticipation that my letter of February the 22d was founded. The event has proved that I was not mistaken, except that it has been much worse than I expected.

It would naturally occur to Mr. Washington, that the secrecy of Jay's mission to England, where there was already an American minister, could not but create some suspicion in the French government, especially as the conduct of Morris had been notorious, and the intimacy of Mr. Washington with Morris was known.

The character which Mr. Washington has attempted to act in the world, is a sort of non-describable, camelion-colored thing, called prudence. It is, in many cases, a substitute for principle, and is so nearly allied to hypocrisy, that it easily slides into it. His genius for prudence furnished him, in this instance, with an expedient that served (as is the natural and general character of all expedients) to diminish the embarrassments of the moment, and multiply them afterwards ; for he caused it to be announced to the French government as a confidential matter, (Mr. Washington should recollect that I was a member of the Convention, and had the means of knowing what I here state)—he caused it, I say, to be announced, and that for the purpose of preventing any uneasiness to France, on the score of Mr. Jay's mission to England, that the object of that mission, and Mr. Jay's authority, were restricted to the demanding of the surrender of the western posts, and indemnification for the cargoes captured in American vessels. Mr. Washington knows that this was untrue ; and knowing this, he had good reason, to himself, for refusing to furnish the House of Representatives with copies of the instructions given to Jay, as he might suspect, among other things, that he

say it is Phineas Bond, an American refugee, but now a British Consul, and that he writes under the signature of Peter Skunk, or Peter Porcupine, or some such signature

should also be called upon for copies of instructions given to other ministers, and that, in the contradiction of instructions, his want of integrity would be detected. Mr. Washington may now, perhaps, learn, when it is too late to be of any use to him, that a man will pass better through the world with a thousand open errors upon his back, than in being detected in *one* sly falsehood. When one is detected, a thousand are suspected.

The first account that arrived in Paris of a treaty being negotiated by Mr. Jay, (for nobody suspected any,) came in an English newspaper, which announced that a treaty, *offensive* and *defensive* had been concluded between the United States of America and England. This was immediately denied by every American in Paris, as an impossible thing and though it was disbelieved by the French, it imprinted a suspicion that some underhand business was going forward. At length the treaty itself arrived, and every well-affected American blushed with shame.

It is curious to observe, how the appearances of characters will change, whilst the root that produces them remains the same. The Washington faction having waded through the slough of negotiation, and whilst it amused France with professions of friendship contrived to injure her, immediately throws off the hypocrite, and assumes the air of a swaggering bravado. The party papers of that imbecile administration were on this occasion filled with paragraphs about sovereignty. A paltroon may boast of his sovereign right to let another kick him, and this is the only kind of sovereignty shown in the treaty with England. But those daring paragraphs, as Timothy Pickering well knows, were intended for France, without whose assistance, in men, money, and ships, Mr. Washington would have cut but a poor figure in the American war. But of his military talents I shall speak hereafter.

I mean not to enter into any discussion of any article of Jay's treaty; I shall speak only of the whole of it. It is attempted to be justified on the ground of its not being a violation of any article or articles of the treaty pre-existing with France. But the sovereign right of explanation does not lie with George Washington and his man Timothy; France, on her part, has, at least, an equal right: and when nations dispute, it is not so much about words as about things.

A man, such as the world calls a sharper, as versed as Jay must be supposed to be in the quibbles of the law, may find a way to

enter into engagements, and make bargains, in such a manner as to cheat some other party, without that party being able, as the phrase is, *to take the law of him*. This often happens in the cabalistical circle of what is called law. But when this is attempted to be acted on the national scale of treaties, it is too despicable to be defended, or to be permitted to exist. Yet this is the trick upon which Jay's treaty is founded, so far as it has relation to the treaty pre-existing with France. It is a counter treaty to that treaty, and perverts all the great articles of that treaty to the injury of France, and makes them operate as a bounty to England, with whom France is at war. The Washington administration shows great desire that the treaty between France and the United States be preserved. Nobody can doubt its sincerity upon this matter. There is not a British minister, a British merchant, or a British agent, or factor, in America, that does not anxiously wish the same thing. The treaty with France, serves now as a passport to supply England with naval stores, and other articles of American produce; whilst the same articles, when coming to France, are made contraband, or seizable, by Jay's treaty with England. The treaty with France says, that neutral ships make neutral property, and thereby gives protection to English property on board American ships; and Jay's treaty delivers up French property on board American ships to be seized by the English. It is too paltry to talk of faith, of national honor, and of the preservation of treaties, whilst such a barefaced treachery as this stares the world in the face.

The Washington administration may save itself the trouble of proving to the French government its most *faithful* intentions of preserving the treaty with France; for France has now no desire that it should be preserved; she had nominated an envoy extraordinary to America, to make Mr. Washington and his government a present of the treaty, and to have no more to do with *that*, or with *him*. It was at the same time officially declared to the American minister at Paris, *that the French Republic had rather have the American government for an open enemy than a treacherous friend*. This, sir, with the internal distractions caused in America, and the loss of character in the world, is the *eventful crisis* alluded to in the beginning of this letter, to which your double politics have brought the affairs of your country. It is time that the eyes of America be opened upon you.

How France would have conducted herself towards America,

and American commerce, after all treaty stipulations had ceased, and under the sense of services rendered and injuries received, I know not. It is, however, an unpleasant reflection, that in all national quarrels, the innocent, and even the friendly part of the community, become involved with the culpable and the unfriendly ; and as the accounts that arrived from America, continued to manifest an invariable attachment, in the general mass of the people, to their original ally, in opposition to the new fangled Washington faction, the resolutions that had been taken in France were suspended. It happened, also, fortunately enough, that Gouverneur Morris was not minister at this time.

There is, however, one point that yet remains in embryo, and which, among other things, serves to show the ignorance of Washington treaty-makers, and their inattention to pre-existing treaties, when they were employing themselves in framing or ratifying the new treaty with England.

The second article of the treaty of commerce between the United States and France, says, "The most Christian King and the United States, engage mutually not to grant any particular favor to other nations in respect to commerce and navigation, that shall not immediately become common to the other party, who shall enjoy the same favor freely, if the concession was freely made, or on allowing the same compensation if the concession was conditional."

All the concessions, therefore, made to England by Jay's treaty, are, through the medium of this second article in the pre-existing treaty, made to France, and become engrafted into the treaty with France, and can be exercised by her as a matter of right, the same as by England.

Jay's treaty makes a concession to England, and that unconditionally, of seizing naval stores in American ships, and condemning them as contraband. It makes also a concession to England to seize provisions and *other articles* in American ships. *Other articles*, are *all other articles* ; and none but an ignoramus, or something worse, would have put such a phrase into a treaty. The condition annexed to this case is, that the provisions and other articles so seized, are to be paid for at a price to be agreed upon. Mr. Washington, as president, ratified this treaty after he knew the British government had recommenced an indiscriminate seizure of provisions, and of all other articles in American ships : and it is

now known that those seizures were made to fit out the expedition going to Quiberon Bay, and it was known beforehand that they would be made. The evidence goes also a good way to prove that Jay and Grenville understood each other upon that subject. Mr. Pinkney, when he passed through France in his way to Spain, spoke of the recommencement of the seizures as a thing that would take place. The French government had by some means received information from London to the same purpose, with the addition, that the recommencement of the seizures would cause no misunderstanding between the British and American governments. Grenville, in defending himself against the opposition in Parliament, on account of the scarcity of corn, said (see his speech at the opening of the parliament that met October 29, 1795) that *the supplies for the Quiberon expedition were furnished out of the American ships*, and all the accounts received at that time from England stated that those seizures were made under the treaty. After the supplies for the Quiberon expedition had been procured, and the expected success had failed, the seizures were countermanded; and had the French seized provision vessels going to England, it is probable that the Quiberon expedition could not have been attempted.

In one point of view, the treaty with England operates as a loan to the English government. It gives permission to that government to take American property at sea, to any amount, and pay for it when it suits her; and, besides this, the treaty is in every point of view a surrender of the rights of American commerce and navigation, and a refusal to France of the rights of neutrality. The American flag is not now a neutral flag to France; Jay's treaty of surrender gives a monopoly of it to England.

On the contrary, the treaty of commerce between America and France was formed on the most liberal principles, and calculated to give the greatest encouragement to the infant commerce of America. France was neither a carrier nor an exporter of naval stores, or of provisions: those articles belonged wholly to America; and they had all the protection in that treaty which a treaty can give. But so much has that treaty been perverted, that the liberality of it on the part of France has served to encourage Jay to form a counter-treaty with England; for he must have supposed the hands of France tied up by her treaty with America, when he was making such large concessions in favor of England. The injury which Mr. Washington's administration has done to the character, as well as to

the commerce, of America, is too great to be repaired by him. Foreign nations will be shy of making treaties with a government that has given the faithless example of perverting the liberality of a former treaty to the injury of the party with whom it was made.

In what a fraudulent light must Mr. Washington's character appear in the world, when his declarations and his conduct are compared together! Here follows the letter he wrote to the Committee of Public Safety, while Jay was negotiating in profound secrecy this treacherous treaty:

“ George Washington, President of the United States of America, to the representatives of the French people, members of the Committee of Public Safety of the *French republic, the great and good friend and ally of the United States.*

“ On the intimation of the wish of the French republic that a new minister should be sent from the United States, I resolved to manifest my sense of the readiness with which *my* request was fulfilled, (that of recalling Genet,) by immediately fulfilling the request of your government, (that of recalling Morris.)

“ It was some time before a character could be obtained worthy of the high office of expressing the attachment of the United States to the happiness of our allies, *and drawing closer the bonds of our friendship.* I have now made choice of James Monroe, one of our distinguished citizens, to reside near the French republic, in quality of minister plenipotentiary of the United States of America. He is instructed to bear to you our *sincere solicitude for your welfare, and to cultivate with zeal the cordiality so happily subsisting between us.* From a knowledge of his fidelity, probity, and good conduct, I have entire confidence that he will render himself acceptable to you, and give effect to your desire of preserving and *advancing, on all occasions, the interest and connexion of the two nations.* I beseech you, therefore, to give full credence to whatever he shall say to you on the part of the United States, and most of all, when he shall assure you that your prosperity is an object of our affection. And I pray God to have the French republic in his holy keeping.

“ G. WASHINGTON.”

Was it by entering into a treaty with England to surrender French property on board American ships to be seized by the English, while English property on board American ships was declared by the French treaty not to be seizable, *that the bonds of friendship between America and France were to be drawn closer?* Was it by declaring naval stores contraband when coming to France, whilst by the French treaty they were not contraband when going to England, that the *connexion between France and America was to be advanced?* Was it by opening the American ports to the British navy in the present war, from which ports the same navy had been expelled by the aid solicited from France in the American war (and that aid gratuitously given) that the gratitude of America was to be shown, and the solicitude spoken of in the letter demonstrated?

As the letter was addressed to the Committee of Public Safety, Mr. Washington did not expect it would get abroad in the world, or be seen by any other eye than that of Robespierre, or be heard by any other ear than that of the Committee; that it would pass as a whisper across the Atlantic from one dark chamber to the other, and there terminate. It was calculated to remove from the mind of the committee all suspicion upon Jay's mission to England, and in this point of view it was suited to the circumstances of the movement then passing; but as the event of that mission has proved the letter to be hypocritical, it serves no other purpose of the present moment than to show that the writer is not to be credited. Two circumstances serve to make the reading of the letter necessary in the Convention: the one was, that they who succeeded on the fall of Robespierre, found it most proper to act with publicity; the other, to extinguish the suspicions which the strange conduct of Morris had occasioned in France.

When the British treaty and the ratification of it by Mr. Washington were known in France, all further declarations from him of his good disposition as an ally and a friend, passed for so many cyphers; but still it appeared necessary to him to keep up the farce of declarations. It is stipulated in the British treaty, that commissioners are to report at the end of two years, on the case of *neutral ships making neutral property*. In the mean time, neutral ships do *not* make neutral property according to the British treaty, and they *do* according to the French treaty. The preservation, therefore, of the French treaty became of great importance to

England, as by that means she can employ American ships as carriers while the same advantage is denied to France. Whether the French treaty could exist as a matter of right after this clandestine perversion of it, could not but give some apprehensions to the partisans of the British treaty, and it became necessary to them to make up by fine words what was wanting in good actions.

An opportunity offered to that purpose. The Convention, on the public reception of Mr. Monroe, ordered the American flag and the French flag to be displayed unitedly in the hall of the Convention. Mr. Monroe made a present of an American flag for the purpose. The Convention returned this compliment, by sending a French flag to America, to be presented by their minister, Mr. Adet, to the American government. This resolution passed long before Jay's treaty was known or suspected: it passed in the days of confidence; but the flag was not presented by Mr. Adet till several months after the treaty had been ratified. Mr. Washington made this the occasion of saying some fine things to the French minister; and the better to get himself into tune to do this, he began by saying the finest things of himself.

"Born, sir," said he, "in a land of liberty; *having* learned its value; *having* engaged in a perilous conflict to defend it; *having*, in a word, devoted the best years of my life to secure its permanent establishment in my own country; *my* anxious recollections, *my* sympathetic feelings, and *my* best wishes, are irresistibly excited, whenever, in any country, I see an oppressed people unfurl the banner of freedom." Mr. Washington, having expended so many fine phrases upon himself, was obliged to invent a new one for the French, and he calls them "Wonderful people!" The coalesced powers acknowledged as much.

It is laughable to hear Mr. Washington talk of his *sympathetic feelings*, who has always been remarked, even among his friends, for not having any. He has, however, given no proofs of any to me. As to the pompous encomiums he so liberally pays to himself on the score of the American revolution, the propriety of them may be questioned; and since he has forced them so much into notice, it is fair to examine his pretensions.

A stranger might be led to suppose, from the egotism with which Mr. Washington speaks, that himself, and himself only, had generated, conducted, completed, established, the revolution. In fine, that it was all his own doing.

In the first place, as to the political part, he had no share in it; and, therefore, the whole of *that* is out of the question with respect to him. There remains, then, only the military part; and it would have been prudent in Mr. Washington not to have awakened inquiry upon that subject. Fame then was cheap; he enjoyed it cheaply; and nobody was disposed to take away the laurels that, whether they were *acquired* or not, had been given.

Mr. Washington's merit consisted in constancy. But constancy was the common virtue of the revolution. Who was there that was inconstant? I know but of one military defection, that of Arnold, and I know of no political defection, among those who made themselves eminent when the revolution was formed by the Declaration of Independence. Even Silas Deane, though he attempted to defraud, did not betray.

But when we speak of military character, something more is to be understood than constancy; and something more *ought* to be understood than the Fabian system of *doing nothing*. The *nothing* part can be done by any body. Old Mrs. Thompson, the housekeeper of head quarters, (who threatened to make the sun and the *wind* shine through Rivington of New York,) could have done it as well as Mr. Washington. Deborah would have been as good as Barak.

Mr. Washington had the nominal rank of commander-in-chief, but he was not so in fact. He had, in reality, only a separate command. He had no control over, or direction of, the army to the northward under Gates, that captured Burgoyne; or of that to the south under Greene, that recovered the southern states.* The nominal rank, however, of commander-in-chief, served to throw upon him the lustre of those actions, and to make him appear as the soul and centre of all military operations in America.

He commenced his command June, 1775, during the time the Massachusetts army lay before Boston, and after the affair of Bunker's Hill. The commencement of his command was the commencement of inactivity. Nothing was afterwards done, or attempted to be done, during the nine months he remained before Boston. If we may judge from the resistance made at Concord, and afterwards at Bunker's Hill, there was a spirit of enterprise at that time, which the presence of Mr. Washington chilled into cold de-

* See Mr. Winterbotham's valuable History of America, lately published.

fence. By the advantage of a good exterior he attracts respect, which his habitual silence tends to preserve; but he has not the talent of inspiring ardor in an army. The enemy removed from Boston to Halifax, in March, 1776, to wait for reinforcements from Europe, and to take a more advantageous position at New York.

The inactivity of the campaign of 1775, on the part of General Washington, when the enemy had a less force than in any other future period of the war, and the injudicious choice of positions taken by him in the campaign of 1776, when the enemy had its greatest force, necessarily produced the losses and misfortunes that marked that gloomy campaign. The positions taken were either islands or necks of land. In the former, the enemy, by the aid of their ships, could bring their whole force against a part of General Washington's, as in the affair of Long Island; and in the latter, he might be shut up as in the bottom of a bag. This had nearly been the case at New York, and it was so in part; it was actually the case at Fort Washington; and it would have been the case at Fort Lee, if General Greene had not moved precipitately off, leaving every thing behind, and by gaining Hackinsuch bridge, got out of the bag of Bergen Neck. How far Mr. Washington, as General, is blameable for these matters, I am not undertaking to determine; but they are evidently defects in military geography. The successful skirmishes at the close of that campaign, (matters that would scarcely be noticed in a better state of things,) make the brilliant exploits of General Washington's seven campaigns. No wonder we see so much pusillanimity in the *President*, when we see so little enterprise in the *General*!

The campaign of 1777 became famous, not by any thing on the part of General Washington, but by the capture of General Burgoyne, and the army under his command, by the northern army at Saratoga, under General Gates. So totally distinct and unconnected were the two armies of Washington and Gates, and so independent was the latter of the authority of the nominal commander-in-chief, that the two Generals did not so much as correspond, and it was only by a letter of General (since Governor) Clinton, that General Washington was informed of that event. The British took possession of Philadelphia this year, which they evacuated the next, just time enough to save their heavy baggage and fleet of transports from capture by the French Admiral D'Estaing, who arrived at the mouth of the Delaware soon after.

The capture of Burgoyne gave an eclat in Europe to the American arms, and facilitated the alliance with France. The eclat, however, was not kept up by any thing on the part of General Washington. The same unfortunate languor that marked his entrance into the field, continued always. Discontent began to prevail strongly against him, and a party was formed in Congress, whilst sitting at Yorktown, in Pennsylvania, for removing him from the command of the army. The hope, however, of better times, the news of the alliance with France, and the unwillingness of showing discontent, dissipated the matter.

Nothing was done in the campaign of 1778, 1779, 1780, in the part where General Washington commanded, except the taking Stony Point by General Wayne. The southern states in the mean time were overrun by the enemy. They were afterwards recovered by General Greene, who had in a very great measure created the army that accomplished that recovery. In all this General Washington had no share. The Fabian system of war, followed by him, began now to unfold itself with all its evils; for what is Fabian war without Fabian means to support it? The finances of Congress depending wholly on emissions of paper money, were exhausted. Its credit was gone. The continental treasury was not able to pay the expense of a brigade of wagons to transport the necessary stores to the army, and yet the sole object, the establishment of the revolution, was a thing of remote distance. The time I am now speaking of is in the latter end of the year 1780.

In this situation of things it was found not only expedient, but absolutely necessary, for Congress to state the whole case to its ally. I know more of this matter, (before it came into Congress, or was known to General Washington,) of its progress, and its issue, than I choose to state in this letter. Colonel John Laurens was sent to France, as an envoy extraordinary on this occasion, and by a private agreement between him and me, I accompanied him. We sailed from Boston in the Alliance frigate, February 11th, 1781. France had already done much in accepting and paying bills drawn by Congress; she was now called upon to do more. The event of Colonel Laurens's mission, with the aid of the venerable minister, Franklin, was, that France gave in money, as a present, six millions of livres, and ten millions more as a loan, and agreed to send a fleet of not less than thirty sail of the line, at her own expense, as an aid to America. Colonel Laurens and myself returned from Brest

the first of June following, taking with us two millions and a half of livres (upwards of one hundred thousand pounds sterling) of the money given, and convoying two ships with stores.

We arrived at Boston the 25th of August following. De Grasse arrived with the French fleet in the Chesapeake at the same time, and was afterwards joined by that of Barras, making thirty-one sail of the line. The money was transported in wagons from Boston to the Bank of Philadelphia, of which Mr. Thomas Willing, who has since put himself at the head of the list of petitioners in favor of the British treaty, was then president. And it was by the aid of this money, and this fleet, and of Rochambeau's army, that Cornwallis was taken; the laurels of which have been unjustly given to Mr. Washington. His merit in that affair was no more than that of any other American officer.

I have had, and still have, as much pride in the American revolution as any man, or as Mr. Washington has a right to have; but that pride has never made me forgetful whence the great aid came that completed the business. Foreign aid (that of France) was calculated upon at the commencement of the revolution. It is one of the subjects treated of in the pamphlet *Common Sense*, but as a matter that could not be hoped for, unless independence was declared. The aid, however, was greater than could have been expected.

It is as well the ingratitude as the pusillanimity of Mr. Washington, and the Washington faction, that has brought upon America the loss of character she now suffers in the world, and the numerous evils her commerce has undergone, and to which it is still exposed. The British ministry soon found out what sort of men they had to deal with, and they dealt with them accordingly; and if further explanation was wanting, it has been fully given since, in the snivelling address of the New York Chamber of Commerce to the president, and in that of sundry merchants of Philadelphia, which was not much better.

When the revolution of America was finally established by the termination of the war, the world gave her credit for great character; and she had nothing to do but to stand firm upon that ground. The British ministry had their hands too full of trouble to have provoked a rupture with her, had she shown a proper resolution to defend her rights: but encouraged as they were by the submissive character of the American administration, they proceeded from insult to insult, till none more were left to be offered. The proposals

made by Sweden and Denmark to the American government, were disregarded. I know not if so much as an answer has been returned to them. The minister *penitentiary*, (as some of the British prints called him,) Mr. Jay, was sent on a pilgrimage to London, to make all up by penance and petition. In the mean time the lengthy and drowsy writer of the pieces signed *Camillus* held himself in reserve to vindicate *every thing*; and to sound in America the tocsin of terror upon the *inexhaustible* resources of England. Her resources, says he, are greater than those of all the other powers. This man is so intoxicated with fear and finance, that he knows not the difference between *plus* and *minus*—between a hundred pounds in hand, and a hundred pounds worse than nothing.

The commerce of America, so far as it had been established, by all the treaties that had been formed prior to that by Jay, was free, and the principles upon which it was established were good. That ground ought never to have been departed from. It was the justifiable ground of right; and no temporary difficulties ought to have induced an abandonment of it. The case is now otherwise. The ground, the scene, the pretensions, the every thing is changed. The commerce of America is, by Jay's treaty, put under foreign dominion. The sea is not free for her. Her right to navigate it is reduced to the right of escaping; that is, until some ship of England or France stops her vessels, and carries them into port. Every article of American produce, whether from the sea or the land, fish, flesh, vegetable, or manufacture, is, by Jay's treaty, made either contraband or seizable. Nothing is exempt. In all other treaties of commerce, the article which enumerates the contraband articles, such as fire arms, gunpowder, &c., is followed by another, which enumerates the articles not contraband; but it is not so in Jay's treaty. There is no exempting article. Its place is supplied by the article for seizing and carrying into port: and the sweeping phrase of provisions and other *articles* includes every thing. There never was such a base and servile treaty of surrender, since treaties began to exist.

This is the ground upon which America now stands. All her rights of commerce and navigation are to begin anew, and that with loss of character to begin with. If there is sense enough left in the heart to call a blush into the cheek, the Washington administration must be ashamed to appear. And as to you, Sir, treacherous in private friendship (for so you have been to me, and that in the day

of danger) and a hypocrite in public life, the world will be puzzled to decide, whether you are an APOSTATE or an IMPOSTOR? Whether you have abandoned good principles, or whether you ever had any?

“THOMAS PAINE.”

APPENDIX.

MEMORIAL

OF

THOMAS PAINE TO MR. MONROE,

ALLUDED TO IN THE FOREGOING LETTER.

Luxembourg, September 10, 1794.

I ADDRESS this memorial to you, in consequence of a letter I received from a friend 18th Fructidor, (September 14th,) in which he says, "Mr. Monroe has told me, that he has no orders (meaning "from the Congress) respecting you; but I am sure he will leave "nothing undone to liberate you. But, from what I can learn, from "all the late Americans, you are not considered either by the government, or by the individuals, as an American citizen. You "have been made a French citizen, which you have accepted, "and you have further made yourself a servant of the French republic; and, therefore, it would be out of character for an American minister to interfere in their internal concerns. You must "therefore either be liberated out of compliance to America, or "stand your trial, which you have a right to demand."

This information was so unexpected by me, that I am at a loss how to answer it. I know not on what principle it originates; whether from an idea that I had voluntarily abandoned my citizenship of America for that of France, or from any article of the American constitution applied to me. The first is untrue with respect to any intention on my part; and the second is without foundation, as I shall show in the course of this memorial.

The idea of conferring honor of citizenship upon foreigners, who had distinguished themselves in propagating the principles of liberty and humanity, in opposition to despotism, war, and bloodshed, was first proposed by me to La Fayette, at the commencement of the French revolution, when his heart appeared to be warmed by

those principles. My motive in making this proposal, was to render the people of different nations more fraternal than they had been, or then were. I observed that almost every branch of science had possessed itself of the exercise of this right, so far as it regarded its institution. Most of the academies and societies in Europe, and also those of America, conferred the rank of honorary member, upon foreigners eminent in knowledge, and made them, in fact, citizens of their literary or scientific republic; without affecting or anywise diminishing their rights of citizenship in their own country or in other societies: and why the science of government should not have the same advantage, or why the people in one nation should not, by their representatives, exercise the right of conferring the honor of citizenship upon individuals eminent in another nation, without affecting *their* rights of citizenship, is a problem yet to be solved:

I now proceed to remark on that part of the letter, in which the writer says, that, "*from all he can learn from the late Americans, I am not considered in America, either by the government or by the individuals, as an American citizen.*"

In the first place I wish to ask, what is here meant by the government of America? The members who compose the government, are only individuals when in conversation, and who, most probably, hold very different opinions upon the subject. Have Congress as a body made any declaration respecting me, that they now no longer consider me as a citizen? If they have not, any thing they otherwise say, is no more than the opinion of individuals, and consequently is not legal authority, or anywise sufficient authority to deprive any man of his citizenship. Besides, whether a man has forfeited his rights of citizenship, is a question not determinable by Congress, but by a court of judicature, and a jury; and must depend upon evidence, and the application of some law or article of the constitution to the case. No such proceeding has yet been had, and consequently I remain a citizen until it be had, be that decision what it may; for there can be no such thing as a suspension of rights in the interim.

I am very well aware, and always was, of the article of the constitution which says, as nearly as I can recollect the words, that "any citizen of the United States, who shall accept any title, place, or office, from any foreign king, prince, or state, shall forfeit and lose his right of citizenship of the United States."

Had the article said, that *any citizen of the United States, who shall be a member of any foreign convention, for the purpose of forming a free constitution, shall forfeit and lose the right of citizenship of the United States*, the article had been directly applicable to me; but the idea of such an article never could have entered the mind of the American convention, and the present article is altogether foreign to the case with respect to me. It supposes a government in active existence, and not a government dissolved; and it supposes a citizen of America, accepting titles and offices under that government, and not a citizen of America, who gives his assistance in a convention, chosen by the people, for the purpose of forming a government *de novo*, founded on their authority.

The late constitution and government of France was dissolved the 10th of August, 1792. The national legislative assembly then in being, supposed itself without sufficient authority to continue its sittings, and it proposed to the departments to elect, not another legislative assembly, but a convention for the express purpose of forming a new constitution. When the assembly were discoursing on this matter, some of the members said, that they wished to gain all the assistance possible upon the subject of free constitutions; and expressed a wish to elect and invite foreigners of any nation to the convention, who had distinguished themselves in defending, explaining, and propagating the principles of liberty. It was on this occasion that my name was mentioned in the assembly. After this, a deputation from a body of the French people, in order to remove any objection that might be made against my assisting at the proposed convention, requested the assembly, as their representatives, to give me the title of French Citizen; after which, I was elected a member of the French convention, in four different departments, as is already known.

The case, therefore, is, that I accepted nothing from any king, prince, or state; or from any government: for France was without any government, except what arose from common consent, and the necessity of the case. Neither did "*I make myself a servant of the French republic*," as the letter alluded to expresses; for at that time France was no republic, not even in name. She was altogether a people in a state of revolution.

It was not until the convention met, that France was declared a republic, and monarchy abolished; soon after which, a committee was elected, of which I was a member, to form a constitution, which

was presented to the convention the 15th and 16th of February following, but was not to be taken into consideration till after the expiration of two months, and if approved of by the convention, was then to be referred to the people for their acceptance, with such additions or amendments as the convention should make.

In thus employing myself upon the formation of a constitution, I certainly did nothing inconsistent with the American constitution. I took no oath of allegiance to France, or any other oath whatever. I considered the citizenship they had presented me, as an honorary mark of respect paid to me not only as a friend to liberty, but as an American citizen. My acceptance of that, or the deputyship, not conferred on me by any king, prince, or state, but by a people in a state of revolution, and contending for liberty, required no transfer of my allegiance, or of my citizenship, from America to France. There I was a real citizen, paying taxes; here, I was a voluntary friend, employing myself on a temporary service. Every American in Paris knew that it was my constant intention to return to America, as soon as a constitution should be established, and that I anxiously waited for that event.

I ever must deny, that the article of the American constitution already mentioned, can be applied either verbally, intentionally, or constructively, to me. It undoubtedly was the intention of the convention that framed it, to preserve the purity of the American republic from being debased by foreign and foppish customs; but it never could be its intention to act against the principles of liberty, by forbidding its citizens to assist in promoting those principles in foreign countries; neither could it be its intention to act against the principles of gratitude. France had aided America in the establishment of her revolution, when invaded and oppressed by England and her auxiliaries. France in her turn was invaded and oppressed by a combination of foreign despots. In this situation, I conceived it an act of gratitude in me, as a citizen of America, to render her in return the best services I could perform. I came to France (for I was in England when I received the invitation) not to enjoy ease, emoluments, and foppish honors, as the article supposes; but to encounter difficulties and dangers in defence of liberty; and I much question whether those who now malignantly seek (for some I believe do) to turn this to my injury, would have had courage to have done the same. I am sure Gouverneur Morris would not. He told me the second day after my arrival, (in Paris,)

that the Austrians and Prussians, who were then at Verdun, would be in Paris in a fortnight. I have no idea, said he, that seventy thousand disciplined troops can be stopped in their march by any power in France.

Besides the reasons I have already given for accepting the invitation to the Convention, I had another that has reference particularly to America, which I mentioned to Mr. Pinkney the night before I left London to come to Paris: "That it was to the interest of America that the system of European governments should be changed and placed on the same principle with her own."

It is certain that governments upon similar systems agree better together than those that are founded on principles discordant with each other; and the same rule holds good with respect to the people living under them. In the latter case they offend each other by pity, or by reproach; and the discordancy carries itself to matters of commerce. I am not an ambitious man, but perhaps I have been an ambitious American. I have wished to see America the *mother church* of government.

I have now stated sufficient matter, to show that the article in question is not applicable to me; and that any such application to my injury, as well in circumstances as in rights, is contrary both to the letter and intention of that article, and is illegal and unconstitutional. Neither do I believe that any jury in America, when they are informed of the whole of the case, would give a verdict to deprive me of my rights upon that article. The citizens of America, I believe, are not very fond of permitting forced and indirect explanations to be put upon matters of this kind. I know not what were the merits of the case with respect to the person who was prosecuted for acting as prize master to a French privateer, but I know that the jury gave a verdict against the prosecution. The rights I have acquired are dear to me. They have been acquired by honorable means, and by dangerous service in the worst of times, and I cannot passively permit them to be wrested from me. I conceive it my duty to defend them, as the case involves a constitutional and public question, which is, how far the power of the federal government extends, in depriving any citizen of his rights of citizenship, or of suspending them.

That the explanation of national treaties belongs to Congress is strictly constitutional; but not the explanation of the constitution

itself, any more than the explanation of law in the case of individual citizens. These are altogether judiciary questions. It is, however, worth observing, that Congress in explaining the article of the treaty with respect to French prizes and French privateers, confined itself strictly to the letter of the article. Let them explain the article of the constitution with respect to me in the same manner, and the decision, did it appertain to them, could not deprive me of my rights of citizenship, or suspend them, for I have accepted nothing from any king, prince, state, or government.

You will please to observe, that I speak as if the federal government had made some declaration upon the subject of my citizenship; whereas the fact is otherwise; and your saying that you have no order respecting me, is a proof of it. They, therefore, who propagate the report of my not being considered as a citizen of America by government, do it to the prolongation of my imprisonment, and without authority; for Congress, *as a government*, has neither decided upon it, nor yet taken the matter into consideration; and I request you to caution such persons against spreading such reports. But be these matters as they may, I cannot have a doubt that you find and feel the case very different, since you have heard what I have to say, and known better what my situation is than you did before your arrival.

Painful as the want of liberty may be, it is a consolation to me to believe, that my imprisonment proves to the world, that I had no share in the murderous system that then reigned. That I was an enemy to it, both morally and politically, is known to all who had any knowledge of me; and could I have written French as well as I can English, I would publicly have exposed its wickedness, and shown the ruin with which it was pregnant. They who have esteemed me on former occasions, whether in America or in Europe, will, I know, feel no cause to abate that esteem, when they reflect, that *imprisonment with preservation of character, is preferable to liberty with disgrace.*

The letter before quoted in the first page of this memorial, says, "It would be out of character for an American minister to interfere in the internal affairs of France." This goes on the idea that I am a citizen of France, and a member of the Convention; which is not the fact. The Convention have declared me to be a foreigner; and consequently the citizenship and the election are null and void. It also has the appearance of a decision, that the article of the con-

stitution, respecting grants made to American citizens by foreign kings, princes, or states, is applicable to me ; which is the very point in question, and against the application of which I contend. I state evidence to the minister, to show that I am not within the letter or meaning of that article ; that it cannot operate against me ; and I apply to him for the protection that I conceive I have a right to ask and to receive. The internal affairs of France are out of the question with respect to my application, or his interference. I ask it not as a citizen of France, for I am not one ; I ask it not as a member of the Convention, for I am not one ; both these, as before said, have been rendered null and void ; I ask it not as a man against whom there is any accusation, for there is none ; I ask it not as an exile from America, whose liberties I have honorably and generously contributed to establish ; I ask it as a citizen of America, deprived of his liberty in France, under the plea of being a foreigner ; and I ask it because I conceive I am entitled to it, upon every principle of constitutional justice and national honor.

the first part of the reign of King Henry the Fifth, from the year 1400 to the year 1413, when he died.

The second part of the reign of King Henry the Fifth, from the year 1413 to the year 1422, when he died.

The third part of the reign of King Henry the Fifth, from the year 1422 to the year 1428, when he died.

The fourth part of the reign of King Henry the Fifth, from the year 1428 to the year 1431, when he died.

The fifth part of the reign of King Henry the Fifth, from the year 1431 to the year 1435, when he died.

The sixth part of the reign of King Henry the Fifth, from the year 1435 to the year 1438, when he died.

The seventh part of the reign of King Henry the Fifth, from the year 1438 to the year 1440, when he died.

The eighth part of the reign of King Henry the Fifth, from the year 1440 to the year 1445, when he died.

The ninth part of the reign of King Henry the Fifth, from the year 1445 to the year 1448, when he died.

The tenth part of the reign of King Henry the Fifth, from the year 1448 to the year 1450, when he died.

The eleventh part of the reign of King Henry the Fifth, from the year 1450 to the year 1453, when he died.

LETTERS
TO THE
CITIZENS OF THE UNITED STATES.

L E T T E R I.

AFTER an absence of almost fifteen years, I am again returned to the country in whose dangers I bore my share, and to whose greatness I contributed my part.

When I sailed for Europe, in the spring of 1787, it was my intention to return to America the next year, and enjoy in retirement the esteem of my friends, and the repose I was entitled to. I had stood out the storm of one revolution, and had no wish to embark in another. But other scenes and other circumstances than those of contemplated ease were allotted to me. The French revolution was beginning to germinate when I arrived in France. The principles of it were good, they were copied from America, and the men who conducted it were honest. But the fury of faction soon extinguished the one, and sent the other to the scaffold. Of those who began that revolution, I am almost the only survivor, and that through a thousand dangers. I owe this not to the prayers of priests, nor to the piety of hypocrites, but to the continued protection of Providence.

But while I beheld with pleasure, the dawn of liberty rising in Europe, I saw with regret the lustre of it fading in America. In less than two years from the time of my departure, some distant symptoms painfully suggested the idea that the principles of the revolution were expiring on the soil that produced them. I received at that time a letter from a female literary correspondent, and in my answer to her, I expressed my fears on that head, in the following pensive soliloquy.

"You touch me on a very tender point, when you say that my friends on your side the water cannot be reconciled to the idea of my abandoning America, even for my native England. They are right; I had rather see my horse Button eating the grass of Bordentown or Morisania, than see all the pomp and show of Europe.

"A thousand years hence, for I must indulge a few thoughts, perhaps in less, America may be what Europe now is. The innocence of her character, that won the hearts of all nations in her favor, may sound like a romance, and her inimitable virtue as if it had never been. The ruins of that liberty, for which thousands have bled, may just furnish materials for a village tale, or extort a sigh from rustic sensibility; whilst the fashionable of that day, enveloped in dissipation, shall deride the principles and deny the fact.

"When we contemplate the fall of empires, and the extinction of the nations of the ancient world, we see but little more to excite our regret, than the mouldering ruins of pompous palaces, magnificent monuments, lofty pyramids, and walls and towers of the most costly workmanship: but when the empire of America shall fall, the subject for contemplative sorrow will be infinitely greater than crumbling brass or marble can inspire. It will not then be said, here stood a temple of vast antiquity, here rose a Babel of invisible height, or there a palace of sumptuous extravagance; but here! ah painful thought! the noblest work of human wisdom—the grandest scene of human glory, the fair cause of freedom ROSE and FELL. Read this, and then ask if I forget America."

I now know from the information I obtain upon the spot, that the impressions that then distressed me, for I was proud of America, were but too well founded. She was turning her back on her own glory, and making hasty strides in the retrograde path of oblivion. But a spark from the altar of *Seventy-six*, unextinguished and unextinguishable through that long night of error, is again lighting up, in every part of the Union, the genuine flame of rational liberty.

As the French revolution advanced, it fixed the attention of the world, and drew from the pensioned pen of Edmund Burke a furious attack. This brought me once more on the public theatre of politics, and occasioned the pamphlet *Rights of Man*. It had the greatest run of any work ever published in the English language. The number of copies circulated in England, Scotland, and Ireland, besides translations into foreign languages, was between four and five hundred thousand. The principles of that work were the same

as those in *Common Sense*, and the effects would have been the same in England as that had produced in America, could the vote of the nation have been quietly taken, or had equal opportunities of consulting or acting existed. The only difference between the two works was, that the one was adapted to the local circumstances of England, and the other to those of America. As to myself, I acted in both cases alike : I relinquished to the people of England, as I had done to those of America, all profits from the work. My reward existed in the ambition to do good, and the independent happiness of my own mind.

But a faction, acting in disguise, was rising in America ; they had lost sight of first principles. They were beginning to contemplate government as a profitable monopoly, and the people as hereditary property. It is, therefore, no wonder that the *Rights of Man* was attacked by that faction, and its author continually abused. But let them go on, give them rope enough, and they will put an end to their own insignificance. There is too much common sense and independence in America to be long the dupe of any faction, foreign or domestic.

But, in the midst of the freedom we enjoy, the licentiousness of the papers called federal, (and I know not why they are called so, for they are in their principles anti-federal and despotic,) is a dishonor to the character of the country, and an injury to its reputation and importance abroad. They represent the whole people of America as destitute of public principle and private manners. As to any injury they can do at home to those whom they abuse, or service they can render to those who employ them, it is to be set down to the account of noisy nothingness. It is on themselves the disgrace recoils, for the reflection easily presents itself to every thinking mind, that *those who abuse liberty when they possess it would abuse power could they obtain it* ; and, therefore, they may as well take as a general motto, for all such papers, *We and our patrons are not fit to be trusted with power*.

There is in America, more than in any other country, a large body of people who attend quietly to their farms, or follow their several occupations, who pay no regard to the clamors of anonymous scribblers, who think for themselves, and judge of government, not by the fury of newspaper writers, but by the prudent frugality of its measures, and the encouragement it gives to the improvement and prosperity of the country, and who, acting on

their own judgment, never come forward in an election but on some important occasion.

When this body moves, all the little barkings of scribbling and witless curs pass for nothing. To say to this independent description of men, You must turn out such and such persons at the next election, for they have taken off a great many taxes, and lessened the expenses of government, they have dismissed my son, or my brother, or myself, from a lucrative office, in which there was nothing to do—is to show the cloven foot of faction, and preach the language of ill disguised mortification. In every part of the Union, this faction is in the agonies of death, and in proportion as its fate approaches, gnashes its teeth and struggles. My arrival has struck it as with an hydrophobia, it is like the sight of water to canine madness.

As this letter is intended to announce my arrival to my friends, and to my enemies, if I have any, for I ought to have none in America, and as introductory to others that will occasionally follow, I shall close it by detailing the line of conduct I shall pursue.

I have no occasion to ask, and do not intend to accept any place or office in the government. There is none it could give me that would be any ways equal to the profits I could make as an author, for I have an established fame in the literary world, could I reconcile it to my principles to make money by my politics or religion; I must be in every thing what I have ever been, a disinterested volunteer; my proper sphere of action is on the common floor of citizenship, and to honest men I give my hand and my heart freely.

I have some manuscript works to publish, of which I shall give proper notice, and some mechanical affairs to bring forward, that will employ all my leisure time. I shall continue these letters as I see occasion, and as to the low party prints that choose to abuse me, they are welcome, I shall not descend to answer them. I have been too much used to such common stuff to take any notice of it. The government of England honored me with a thousand martyrdoms, by burning me in effigy in every town in that country, and their hirelings in America may do the same.

THOMAS PAINE.

City of Washington.

L E T T E R II.

As the affairs of the country, to which I am returned, are of more importance to the world and to me, than of that I have lately left, (for it is through the new world the old must be regenerated, if regenerated at all,) I shall not take up the time of the reader with an account of scenes that have passed in France, many of which are painful to remember and horrid to relate, but come at once to the circumstances in which I find America on my arrival.

Fourteen years, and something more, have produced a change, at least among a part of the people, and I ask myself what it is? I meet or hear of thousands of my former connexions, who are men of the same principles and friendships as when I left them. But a non-descript race, and of equivocal generation, assuming the name of *federalist*, a name that describes no character of principle good or bad, and may equally be applied to either, has since started up with the rapidity of a mushroom, and like a mushroom, is withering on its rootless stalk. Are those men *federalized* to support the liberties of their country or to overturn them? To add to its fair fame or riot on its spoils? The name contains no defined idea. It is like John Adams's definition of a republic in his letter to Mr. Wythe of Virginia. *It is*, says he, *an empire of laws and not of men*. But as laws may be bad as well as good, an empire of laws may be the best of all governments or the worst of all tyrannies. But John Adams is a man of paradoxical heresies, and consequently of a bewildered mind. He wrote a book entitled, "*A Defence of the American Constitutions*," and the principles of it are an attack upon them. But the book is descended to the tomb of forgetfulness, and the best fortune that can attend its author is quietly to follow its fate. John was not born for immortality. But, to return to federalism.

In the history of parties and the names they assume, it often happens, that they finish by the direct contrary principles with which they profess to begin, and thus it has happened with federalism.

During the time of the old Congress, and prior to the establishment of the federal government, the continental belt was too loosely buckled. The several states were united in name but not in fact, and that nominal union had neither centre nor circle. The laws of

one state frequently interfered with, and sometimes opposed, those of another. Commerce between state and state was without protection, and confidence without a point to rest on. The condition the country was then in, was aptly described by Pelatiah Webster, when he said, "*thirteen staves and ne'er a hoop will not make a barrel.*"

If, then, by *feederalist* is to be understood one who was for cementing the Union by a general government operating equally over all the states, in all matters that embraced the common interest, and to which the authority of the states severally was not adequate, for no one state can make laws to bind another; if, I say, by a *federalist* is meant a person of this description, (and this is the origin of the name,) *I ought to stand first on the list of federalists*, for the proposition for establishing a general government over the Union, came originally from me in 1783, in a written memorial to Chancellor Livingston, then secretary for foreign affairs to Congress, Robert Morris, minister of finance, and his associate, Gouverneur Morris, all of whom are now living, and we had a dinner and conference at Robert Morris's on the subject. The occasion was as follows:

Congress had proposed a duty of five per cent. on imported articles, the money to be applied as a fund towards paying the interest of loans to be borrowed in Holland. The resolve was sent to the several states to be enacted into a law. Rhode Island absolutely refused. I was at the trouble of a journey to Rhode Island to reason with them on the subject. Some other of the states enacted it with alterations, each one as it pleased. Virginia adopted it, and afterwards repealed it, and the affair came to nothing.

It was then visible, at least to me, that either Congress must frame the laws necessary for the Union, and send them to the several states to be enregistered without any alteration, which would in itself appear like usurpation on one part, and passive obedience on the other, or some method must be devised to accomplish the same end by constitutional principles; and the proposition I made in the memorial was, to *add a continental legislature to Congress, to be elected by the several states*. The proposition met the full approbation of the gentlemen to whom it was addressed, and the conversation turned on the manner of bringing it forward. Gouverneur Morris, in walking with me after dinner, wished me to throw out the idea in the newspapers; I replied, that I did not like to be always the proposer of new things, that it would have too assuming

an appearance ; and besides, that *I did not think the country was quite wrong enough to be put right*. I remember giving the same reason to Dr. Rush, at Philadelphia, and to General Gates, at whose quarters I spent a day on my return from Rhode Island, and I suppose they will remember it, because the observation seemed to strike them.

But the embarrassments increasing, as they necessarily must from the want of a better cemented union, the state of Virginia proposed holding a commercial convention, and that convention, which was not sufficiently numerous, proposed that another convention, with more extensive and better defined powers, should be held at Philadelphia, May 10, 1787.

When the plan of the federal government, formed by this convention, was proposed and submitted to the consideration of the several states, it was strongly objected to in each of them. But the objections were not on anti-federal grounds, but on constitutional points. Many were shocked at the idea of placing, what is called, executive power, in the hands of a single individual. To them it had too much the form and appearance of a military government, or a despotic one. Others objected that the powers given to a president were too great, and that in the hands of an ambitious and designing man, it might grow into tyranny, as it did in England under Oliver Cromwell, and as it has since done in France. A republic must not only be so in its principles, but in its forms. The executive part of the federal government was made for a man, and those who consented, against their judgment, to place executive power in the hands of a single individual, reposed more on the supposed moderation of the person they had in view, than on the wisdom of the measure itself.

Two considerations, however, overcame all objections. The one was, the absolute necessity of a federal government. The other, the rational reflection, that as government in America is founded on the representative system, any error in the first essay could be reformed by the same quiet and rational process by which the constitution was formed ; and that, either by the generation then living, or by those who were to succeed. If ever America lose sight of this principle, she will no longer be the *land of liberty*. The father will become the assassin of the rights of the son, and his descendants be a race of slaves.

As many thousands who were minors are grown up to manhood

since the name of *federalist* began, it became necessary, for their information, to go back and show the origin of the name, which is now no longer what it originally was ; but it is the more necessary to do this, in order to bring forward, in the open face of day, the apostasy of those who first called themselves federalists.

To them it served as a cloak for treason, a mask for tyranny. Scarcely were they placed in the seat of power and office, than federalism was to be destroyed, and the representative system of government, the pride and glory of America, and the palladium of her liberties, was to be overthrown and abolished. The next generation was not to be free. The son was to bend his neck beneath the father's foot, and live, deprived of his rights, under hereditary control. Among the men of this apostate description, is to be ranked the ex-president *John Adams*. It has been the political career of this man to begin with hypocrisy, proceed with arrogance, and finish in contempt. May such be the fate of all such characters.

I have had doubts of John Adams ever since the year 1776. In a conversation with me at that time, concerning the pamphlet *Common Sense*, he censured it because it attacked the English form of government. John was for independence because he expected to be made great by it ; but it was not difficult to perceive, for the surliness of his temper makes him an awkward hypocrite, that his head was as full of kings, queens, and knaves, as a pack of cards. But John has lost deal.

When a man has a concealed project in his brain that he wants to bring forward, and fears will not succeed, he begins with it as physicians do by suspected poison, try it first on an animal ; if it agree with the stomach of the animal, he makes further experiments, and this was the way John took. His brain was teeming with projects to overturn the liberties of America, and the representative system of government, and he began by hinting it in little companies. The secretary of John Jay, an excellent painter and a poor politician, told me, in presence of another American, Daniel Parker, that in a company where himself was present, John Adams talked of making the government hereditary, and that as Mr. Washington had no children, it should be made hereditary in the family of Lund Washington. John had not impudence enough to propose himself in the first instance, as the old French Normandy baron did, who offered to come over to be king of America, and if Congress

did not accept his offer, that they would give him thirty thousand pounds for the generosity of it ; but John, like a mole, was grubbing his way to it under ground. He knew that Lund Washington was unknown, for nobody had heard of him, and that as the president had no children to succeed him, the vice president had, and if the treason had succeeded, and the hint with it, the goldsmith might be sent for to take measure of the head of John or of his son for a golden wig. In this case, the good people of Boston might have for a king the man they have rejected as a delegate. The representative system is fatal to ambition.

Knowing, as I do, the consummate vanity of John Adams, and the shallowness of his judgment, I can easily picture to myself that when he arrived at the federal city, he was strutting in the pomp of his imagination before the presidential house, or in the audience hall, and exulting in the language of Nebuchadnezzar, "Is not this great Babylon that I have built for the honor of my majesty !" But in that unfortunate hour, or soon after, John, like Nebuchadnezzar, was driven from among men, and fled with the speed of a post horse.

Some of John Adams's loyal subjects, I see, have been to present him with an address on his birthday ; but the language they use is too tame for the occasion. Birthday addresses, like birthday odes, should not creep along like mildrops down a cabbage leaf, but roll in a torrent of poetical metaphor. I will give them a specimen for the next year. Here it is—

When an Ant, in travelling over the globe, lift up its foot, and put it again on the ground, it shakes the earth to its centre : but when YOU, the mighty Ant of the East, was born, &c. &c. &c., the centre jumped upon the surface.

This, gentlemen, is the proper style of addresses from *well-bred* ants to the monarch of the ant hills ; and as I never take pay for preaching, praying, politics, or poetry, I make you a present of it. Some people talk of impeaching John Adams ; but I am for softer measures. I would keep him to make fun of. He will then answer one of the ends for which he was born, and he ought to be thankful that I am arrived to take his part. I voted in earnest to save the life of one unfortunate king, and I now vote in jest to save another. It is my fate to be always plagued with fools. But to return to federalism and apostacy.

The plan of the leaders of the faction was to overthrow the liber-

ties of the new world, and place government on the corrupt system of the old. They wanted to hold their power by a more lasting tenure than the choice of their constituents. It is impossible to account for their conduct and the measures they adopted on any other ground. But to accomplish that object, a standing army and a prodigal revenue must be raised ; and to obtain these, pretences must be invented to deceive. Alarms of dangers that did not exist even in imagination, but in the direct spirit of lying, were spread abroad. Apostacy stalked through the land in the garb of patriotism, and the torch of treason blinded for a while the flame of liberty.

For what purpose could an army of twenty-five thousand men be wanted ? A single reflection might have taught the most credulous that while the war raged between France and England, neither could spare a man to invade America. For what purpose, then, could it be wanted ? The case carries its own explanation. It was wanted for the purpose of destroying the representative system, for it could be employed for no other. Are these men federalists ? If they are, they are federalized to deceive and to destroy.

The rage against Dr. Logan's patriotic and voluntary mission to France was excited by the shame they felt at the detection of the false alarms they had circulated. As to the opposition given by the remnant of the faction to the repeal of the taxes laid on during the former administration, it is easily accounted for. The repeal of those taxes was a sentence of condemnation on those who laid them on, and in the opposition they gave in that repeal, they are to be considered in the light of criminals standing on their defence, and the country has passed judgment upon them.

THOMAS PAINE.

City of Washington, Lovett's Hotel,

Nov. 19 1802.

L E T T E R I I I .

TO ELECT, and to REJECT, is the prerogative of a free people.

Since the establishment of independence, no period has arrived, that so decidedly proves the excellence of the representative system of government, and its superiority over every other, as the time we now live in. Had America been cursed with John Adams's *hereditary monarchy*, or Alexander Hamilton's *senate for life*, she must have sought, in the doubtful contest of civil war, what she now obtains by the expression of public will. An appeal to elections, decides better than an appeal to the sword.

The reign of terror that raged in America, during the latter end of the Washington administration, and the whole of that of Adams, is enveloped in mystery to me. That there were men in the government hostile to the representative system, though it is now their overthrow, was once their boast, and therefore the fact is established against them. But that so large a mass of the people should become the dupes of those who were loading them with taxes, in order to load them with chains, and deprive them of the right of election, can be ascribed only to that species of wildfire rage, lighted up by falsehood, that not only acts without reflection, but is too impetuous to make any.

There is a general and striking difference between the genuine effects of truth itself, and the effects of falsehoods believed to be truth. Truth is naturally benign; but falsehood believed to be truth is always furious. The former delights in serenity, is mild and persuasive, and seeks not the auxiliary aid of invention. The latter sticks at nothing. It has naturally no morals. Every lie is welcome that suits its purpose. It is the innate character of the thing, to act in this manner, and the criterion by which it may be known, whether in politics or religion. When any thing is attempted to be supported by lying, it is presumptive evidence that the thing so supported is a lie also. The stock on which a lie can be engrafted must be of the same species as the graft.

What is become of the mighty clamor of French invasions, and the cry that our country is in danger, and taxes and armies must be raised to defend it? The danger is fled with the faction that created it, and what is worst of all, the money is fled too. It is I only that have committed the hostility of invasion, and all the artillery of pop

guns are prepared for action. *Poor fellows*, how they foam ! They set half their own partisans in laughter ; for among ridiculous things, nothing is more ridiculous than ridiculous rage. But I hope they will not leave off. I shall lose half my greatness when they cease to lie.

So far as respects myself, I have reason to believe, and a right to say, that the leaders of the reign of terror in America, and the leaders of the reign of terror in France, during the time of Robespierre, were in character the same sort of men ; or how is it to be accounted for, that I was persecuted by both at the same time ? When I was voted out of the French Convention, the reason assigned for it was, that I was a foreigner. When Robespierre had me seized in the night, and imprisoned in the Luxembourg, (where I remained eleven months,) he assigned no reason for it. But when he proposed bringing me to the tribunal, which was like sending me at once to the scaffold, he then assigned a reason, and the reason was, *for the interest of America as well as of France*. "*Pour l'interet de l'Amerique autant que de la France*." The words are in his own hand writing, and reported to the Convention by the committee appointed to examine his papers, and are printed in their report, with this reflection added to them, "*Why Thomas Paine more than another ? Because he contributed to the liberty of both worlds*."

There must have been a coalition in sentiment, if not in fact, between the terrorists of America and the terrorists of France, and Robespierre must have known it, or he could not have had the idea of putting America into the bill of accusation against me. Y these men, these terrorists of the new world, who were waiting in the devotion of their hearts, for the joyful news of my destruction, are the same banditti who are now bellowing in all the hacknied language of hacknied hypocrisy, about humanity, and piety, and often about something they call infidelity, and they finish with the chorus of *Crucify him, crucify him*. I am become so famous among them, they cannot eat or drink without me. I serve them as a standing dish, and they cannot make up a bill of fare if I am not in it.

But there is one dish, and that the choicest of all, that they have not presented on the table, and it is time they should. They have not yet *accused Providence of infidelity*. Yet according to their outrageous piety, she must be as bad as Thomas Paine ; she has pro-

tected him in all his dangers, patronized him in all his undertakings, encouraged him in all his ways, and rewarded him at last by bringing him in safety and in health to the promised land. This is more than she did by the Jews, the chosen people, that they tell us she brought out of the land of Egypt, and out of the house of bondage ; for they all died in the wilderness, and Moses too.

I was one of the nine members that composed the first Committee of Constitution. Six of them have been destroyed. Sieyes and myself have survived—he by bending with the times, and I by not bending. The other survivor joined Robespierre, he was seized and imprisoned in his turn, and sentenced to transportation. He has since apologized to me for having signed the warrant, by saying, he felt himself in danger and was obliged to do it.

Herault Sechelles, an acquaintance of Mr. Jefferson, and a good patriot, was my *suppliant* as member of the Committee of Constitution, that is, he was to supply my place, if I had not accepted or resigned, being next in number of votes to me. He was imprisoned in the Luxembourg with me, was taken to the tribunal and the guillotine, and I, his principal, was left.

There were two foreigners in the Convention, Anarcharsis Cloots and myself. We were both put out of the Convention by the same vote, arrested by the same order, and carried to prison together the same night. He was taken to the guillotine, and I was again left. Joel Barlow was with us when we went to prison.

Joseph Lebon, one of the vilest characters that ever existed, and who made the streets of Arras run with blood, was my *suppliant*, as member of the Convention for the department of the Pas de Calais. When I was put out of the Convention he came and took my place. When I was liberated from prison and voted again into the Convention, he was sent to the same prison and took my place there, and he was sent to the guillotine instead of me. He supplied my place all the way through.

One hundred and sixty-eight persons were taken out of the Luxembourg in one night, and a hundred and sixty of them guillotined next day, of which I now know I was to have been one ; and the manner I escaped that fate is curious, and has all the appearance of accident.

The room in which I was lodged was on the ground floor, and one of a long range of rooms under a gallery, and the door of it opened outward and flat against the wall ; so that when it was

open the inside of the door appeared outward, and the contrary when it was shut. I had three comrades, fellow prisoners with me, Joseph Vanhuile of Bruges, since president of the municipality of that town, Michael, and Robbins Bastini, of Louvain.

When persons by scores and by hundreds were to be taken out of the prison for the guillotine it was always done in the night, and those who performed that office had a private mark or signal, by which they knew what rooms to go to, and what number to take. We, as I have said, were four, and the door of our room was marked, unobserved by us, with that number in chalk ; but it happened, if happening is a proper word, that the mark was put on when the door was open, and flat against the wall, and thereby came on the inside when we shut it at night, and the destroying angel passed by it. A few days after this, Robespierre fell, and Mr. Monroe arrived and reclaimed me, and invited me to his house.

During the whole of my imprisonment, prior to the fall of Robespierre, there was no time when I could think my life worth twenty-four hours, and my mind was made up to meet its fate. The Americans in Paris went in a body to the Convention to reclaim me, but without success. There was no party among them with respect to me. My only hope then rested on the government of America, that it would *remember me*. But the icy heart of ingratitude, in whatever man it be placed, has neither feeling nor sense of honor. The letter of Mr. Jefferson has served to wipe away the reproach, and done justice to the mass of the people of America.

When a party was forming, in the latter end of seventy-seven, and beginning of seventy-eight, of which John Adams was one, to remove Mr. Washington from the command of the army on the complaint that *he did nothing*, I wrote the fifth number of the Crisis, and published it at Lancaster, (Congress then being at Yorktown, in Pennsylvania,) to ward off that meditated blow : for though I well knew that the black times of seventy-six was the natural consequence of his want of military judgment in the choice of positions into which the army was put about New York and New Jersey, I could see no possible advantage, and nothing but mischief, that could arise by distracting the army into parties, which would have been the case had the intended motion gone on.

General Lee, who, with a sarcastic genius, joined a great fund of military knowledge, was perfectly right when he said, "*We have no business on islands, and in the bottom of bogs, where the enemy,*

by the aid of its ships, can bring its whole force against a part of ours and shut it up. This had like to have been the case at New York, and it was the case at Fort Washington, and would have been the case at Fort Lee if General Greene had not moved instantly off on the first news of the enemy's approach. I was with Greene through the whole of that affair, and know it perfectly.

But though I came forward in defence of Mr. Washington when he was attacked, and made the best that could be made of a series of blunders that had nearly ruined the country, he left me to perish when I was in prison. But as I told him of it in his life-time, I should not now bring it up, if the ignorant impertinence of some of the federal papers, who are pushing Mr. Washington forward as their stalking horse, did not make it necessary.

That gentleman did not perform his part in the revolution better, nor with more honor, than I did mine, and the one part was as necessary as the other. He accepted as a present, (though he was already rich,) a hundred thousand acres of land in America, and left me to occupy six foot of earth in France. I wish, for his own reputation, he had acted with more justice. But it was always known of Mr. Washington, by those who best knew him, that he was of such an icy and death-like constitution, that he neither loved his friends nor hated his enemies. But, be this as it may, I see no reason that a difference between Mr. Washington and me should be made a theme of discord with other people. There are those who may see merit in both, without making themselves partisans of either, and with this reflection I close the subject.

As to the hypocritical abuse thrown out by the federalists on other subjects, I recommend to them the observance of a commandment that existed before either Christian or Jew existed.

"Thou shalt make a covenant with thy senses.
 "With thine eye, that it behold no evil.
 "With thine ear, that it hear no evil.
 "With thy tongue, that it speak no evil.
 "With thy hands, that they commit no evil."

If the federalists will follow this commandment, they will leave off lying.

THOMAS PAINE.

*Federal City, Lovett's Hotel,
 Nov. 26, 1802.*

LETTER IV.

As Congress is on the point of meeting, the public papers will necessarily be occupied with the debates of the ensuing session, and as, in consequence of my long absence from America, my private affairs require my attendance, (for it is necessary I do this, or I could not preserve, as I do, my independence,) I shall close my address to the public with this letter.

I congratulate them on the success of the late elections, and *that* with the additional confidence, that while honest men are chosen and wise measures pursued, neither the treason of apostacy, masked under the name of federalism, of which I have spoken in my second letter, nor the intrigues of foreign emissaries, acting in concert with that mask, can prevail.

As to the licentiousness of the papers calling themselves *federal*, a name that apostacy has taken, it can hurt nobody but the party or the persons who support such papers. There is naturally a wholesome pride in the public mind that revolts at open vulgarity. It feels itself dishonored even by hearing it, as a chaste woman feels dishonor by hearing obscenity she cannot avoid. It can smile at wit, or be diverted with strokes of satirical humor, but it detests the *blackguard*. The same sense of propriety that governs in private companies, governs in public life. If a man in company runs his wit upon another, it may draw a smile from some persons present, but as soon as he turns a blackguard in his language, the company gives him up; and it is the same in public life. The event of the late election shows this to be true; for in proportion as those papers have become more and more vulgar and abusive, the elections have gone more and more against the party they support, or that supports them. Their predecessor, *Porcupine*, had wit—these scribblers have none. But as soon as his *blackguardism* (for it is the proper name of it) outran his wit, he was abandoned by every body but the English minister that protected him.

The Spanish proverb says, "*there never was a cover large enough to hide itself;*" and the proverb applies to the case of those papers and the shattered remnant of the faction that supports them. The falsehoods they fabricate, and the abuse they circulate, is a cover to hide something from being seen, but it is not large enough to hide itself. It is as a tub thrown out to the whale to prevent its

attacking and sinking the vessel. They want to draw the attention of the public from thinking about, or inquiring into, the measures of the late administration, and the reason why so much public money was raised and expended; and so far as a lie today, and a new one tomorrow, will answer this purpose, it answers theirs. It is nothing to them whether they be believed or not, for if the negative purpose be answered, the main point is answered to them.

He that picks your pocket always tries to make you look another way. "Look," says he, "at yon man t'other side the street—what a nose he has got?—Lord, yonder is a chimney on fire!—Do you see yon man going along in the salamander great coat? That is the very man that stole one of Jupiter's satellites, and sold it to a countryman for a gold watch, and it set his breeches on fire!" Now the man that has his hand in your pocket, does not care a farthing whether you believe what he says or not. All his aim is to prevent your looking at *him*; and this is the case with the remnant of the federal faction. The leaders of it have imposed upon the country, and they want to turn the attention of it from the subject.

In taking up any public matter, I have never made it a consideration, and never will, whether it be popular or unpopular; but whether it be *right* or *wrong*. The right will always become the popular, if it has courage to show itself, and the shortest way is always a straight line. I despise expedients, they are the gutter hole of politics, and the sink where reputation dies. In the present case, as in every other, I cannot be accused of using any; and I have no doubt but thousands will hereafter be ready to say, as *Gouverneur Morris* said to me, after having abused me pretty handsomely in Congress, for the opposition I gave the fraudulent demand of *Silas Deane* of two thousand pounds sterling: "*Well! we were all duped, and I among the rest!*"

Were the late administration to be called upon to give reasons for the expense it put the country to, it can give none. The danger of an invasion was a bubble that served as a cover to raise taxes and armies to be employed on some other purpose. But if the people of America believed it true, the cheerfulness with which they supported those measures and paid those taxes, is an evidence of their patriotism; and if they supposed me their enemy, though in that supposition they did me injustice, it was not injustice in them. He that acts as he believes, though he may act wrong, is not conscious of wrong.

But though there was no danger, no thanks are due to the late administration for it. They sought to blow up a flame between the two countries; and so intent were they upon this, that they went out of their way to accomplish it. In a letter which the secretary of state, Timothy Pickering, wrote to Mr. Skipwith, the American Consul at Paris, he broke off from the official subject of his letter, to *thank God*, in very exulting language, *that the Russians had cut the French army to pieces*. Mr. Skipwith, after showing me the letter, very prudently concealed it.

It was the injudicious and wicked acrimony of this letter, and some other like conduct of the then secretary of state, that occasioned me, in a letter to a friend in the government, to say, that if there was any official business to be done in France, till a regular minister could be appointed, it could not be trusted to a more proper person than Mr. Skipwith.

"*He is,*" said I, "*an honest man, and will do business, and that with good manners to the government he is commissioned to act with. A faculty which that BEAR, Timothy Pickering, wanted, and which the BEAR of that BEAR, John Adams, never possessed.*"

In another letter to the same friend, in 1797, and which was put unsealed under cover to Colonel Burr, I expressed a satisfaction that Mr. Jefferson, since he was not president, had accepted the vice presidency, "*for,*" said I, "*John Adams has such a talent for blundering and offending, it will be necessary to keep an eye over him.*" He has now sufficiently proved, that though I have not the spirit of prophecy, I have the gift of *judging right*. And all the world knows, for it cannot help knowing, that to judge *rightly*, and to write *clearly*, and that upon all sorts of subjects; to be able to command thought, and, as it were, to play with it at pleasure, and be always master of one's temper in writing, is the faculty only of a serene mind, and the attribute of a happy and philosophical temperament. The scribblers, who know me not, and who fill their papers with paragraphs about me, besides, their want of talents, drink too many slings and drams in a morning, to have any chance with me. But, poor fellows! they must do something for the little pittance they get from their employers. This is my apology for them.

My anxiety to get back to America was great for many years. It is the country of my heart, and the place of my political and literary birth. It was the American revolution that made me an author, and forced into action the mind that had been dormant, and had

no wish for public life, nor has it now. By the accounts I received, she appeared to me to be going wrong, and that some meditated treason against her liberties lurked at the bottom of her government. I heard that my friends were oppressed, and I longed to take my standing among them, and if "*other times to try men's souls*" were to arrive, that I might bear my share. But my efforts to return were ineffectual.

As soon as Mr. Monroe had made a good standing with the French government, for the conduct of his predecessor had made his reception as minister difficult, he wanted to send despatches to his own government by a person to whom he could confide a verbal communication, and he fixed his choice on me. He then applied to the Committee of Public Safety for a passport; but as I had been voted again into the Convention, it was only the Convention that could give the passport; and as an application to them for that purpose, would have made my going publicly known, I was obliged to sustain the disappointment, and Mr. Monroe to lose the opportunity.

When that gentleman left France to return to America, I was to have gone with him. It was fortunate I did not. The vessel he sailed in was visited by a British frigate, that searched every part of it, and down to the hold, for Thomas Paine. I then went, the same year, to embark at Havre. But several British frigates were cruising in sight of the port who knew I was there, and I had to return again to Paris. Seeing myself thus cut off from every opportunity that was in my power to command, I wrote to Mr. Jefferson, that, if the fate of the election should put him in the chair of the presidency, and he should have occasion to send a frigate to France, he would give me the opportunity of returning by it, which he did. But I declined coming by the Maryland, the vessel that was offered me, and waited for the frigate that was to bring the new minister, Mr. Chancellor Livingston, to France; but that frigate was ordered round to the Mediterranean; and as at that time the war was over, and the British cruisers called in, I could come any way. I then agreed to come with Commodore Barney in a vessel he had engaged. It was again fortunate I did not, for the vessel sunk at sea, and the people were preserved in the boat.

Had half the number of evils befallen me that the number of dangers amount to through which I have been preserved, there are those who would ascribe it to the wrath of heaven; why then do they not ascribe my preservation to the protecting favor of heaven?

Even in my worldly concerns I have been blessed. The little property I left in America, and which I cared nothing about, not even to receive the rent of it, has been increasing in the value of its capital more than eight hundred dollars every year, for the fourteen years and more that I have been absent from it. I am now in my circumstances independent; and my economy makes me rich. As to my health, it is perfectly good, and I leave the world to judge of the stature of my mind. I am in every instance a living contradiction to the mortified federalists.

In my publications, I follow the rule I began with in *Common Sense*, that is, to consult nobody, nor to let any body see what I write till it appears publicly. Were I to do otherwise, the case would be, that between the timidity of some, who are so afraid of doing wrong, that they never do right, the puny judgment of others, and the despicable craft of preferring *expedient to right*, as if the world was a world of babies in leading strings, I should get forward with nothing. My path is a right line, as straight and clear to me as a ray of light. The boldness (if they will have it to be so) with which I speak on any subject, is a compliment to the judgment of the reader. It is like saying to him, *I treat you as a man and not as a child*. With respect to any worldly object, as it is impossible to discover any in me, therefore what I do, and my manner of doing it, ought to be ascribed to a good motive.

In a great affair, where the happiness of man is at stake, I love to work for nothing; and so fully am I under the influence of this principle, that I should lose the spirit, the pleasure, and the pride of it, were I conscious that I looked for reward; and with this declaration, I take my leave for the present.

THOMAS PAINE.

*Federal City, Lovett's Hotel,
Dec. 3 1802.*

L E T T E R V.

TOWARDS the latter end of last December, I received a letter from a venerable patriot, Samuel Adams, dated Boston, Nov. 30. It came by a private hand, which I suppose was the cause of the delay. I wrote Mr. Adams an answer, dated Jan. 1st, and that I might be certain of his receiving it, and also that I might know of that reception, I desired a friend of mine at Washington to put it under cover to some friend of his at Boston, and desire him to present it to Mr. Adams. The letter was accordingly put under cover while I was present, and given to one of the clerks of the post office to seal and put in the mail. The clerk put it in his pocket book, and either forgot to put it into the mail, or supposed he had done so among other letters. The post-master general, on learning this mistake, informed me of it, last Saturday, and as the cover was then out of date, the letter was put under a new cover, with the same request, and forwarded by the post. I felt concern at this accident, lest Mr. Adams should conclude I was unmindful of his attention to me; and therefore, lest any further accident should prevent or delay his receiving it, as well as to relieve myself from that concern, I give the letter an opportunity of reaching him by the newspapers. I am the more induced to do this, because some manuscript copies have been taken of both letters, and therefore, there is a possibility of imperfect copies getting into print; and besides this, if some of the federal printers (for I hope they are not all base alike) could get hold of a copy, they would make no scruple of altering it, and publishing it as mine. I therefore send you the original letter, of Mr. Adams, and my own copy of the answer.

THOMAS PAINE.

Federal City.

LETTER VI.

Boston, Nov. 30, 1802.

SIR :

I have frequently with pleasure reflected on your services to my native and your adopted country. Your Common Sense and your Crisis unquestionably awakened the public mind, and led the people loudly to call for a declaration of our national independence. I therefore esteemed you as a warm friend to the liberty and lasting welfare of the human race. But when I heard that you had turned your mind to a defence of infidelity, I felt myself much astonished and more grieved, that you had attempted a measure so injurious to the feelings and so repugnant to the true interest of so great a part of the citizens of the United States. The people of New England, if you will allow me to use a scripture phrase, are fast returning to their first love. Will you excite among them the spirit of angry controversy, at a time when they are hastening to unity and peace? I am told that some of our newspapers have announced your intention to publish an additional pamphlet upon the principles of your Age of Reason. Do you think that your pen, or the pen of any other man, can unchristianize the mass of our citizens, or have you hopes of converting a few of them to assist you in so bad a cause? We ought to think ourselves happy in the enjoyment of opinion without the danger of persecution by civil or ecclesiastical law.

Our friend, the president of the United States, has been calumniated for his liberal sentiments, by men who have attributed that liberality to a latent design to promote the cause of infidelity. This and all other slanders have been made without a shadow of proof. Neither religion nor liberty can long subsist in the tumult of altercation, and amidst the noise and violence of faction.

Felix qui cautus

Adieu.

SAMUEL ADAMS.

Mr. Thomas Paine.

LETTER VII.

TO SAMUEL ADAMS.

MY DEAR AND VENERABLE FRIEND,

I RECEIVED with great pleasure your friendly and affectionate letter of Nov. 30th, and I thank you also for the frankness of it. Between men in pursuit of truth, and whose object is the happiness of man both here and hereafter, there ought to be no reserve. Even error has a claim to indulgence, if not to respect, when it is believed to be truth. I am obliged to you for your affectionate remembrance of what you style my services in awakening the public mind to a declaration of independence, and supporting it after it was declared. I also, like you, have often looked back on those times, and have thought, that if independence had not been declared at the time it was, the public mind could not have been brought up to it afterwards. It will immediately occur to you, who were so intimately acquainted with the situation of things at that time, that I allude to the black times of *seventy-six*; for though I know, and you my friend also know, they were no other than the natural consequences of the military blunders of that campaign, the country might have viewed them as proceeding from a natural inability to support its cause against the enemy, and have sunk under the despondency of that misconceived idea. This was the impression against which it was necessary the country should be strongly animated.

I now come to the second part of your letter, on which I shall be as frank with you as you are with me. "But (say you) when I *heard* you had turned your mind to a defence of *infidelity*, I felt myself much astonished," &c. What, my good friend, do you call believing in God *infidelity*? for that is the great point mentioned in the Age of Reason against all divided beliefs and *allegorical* divinities. The Bishop of Llandaff (Dr. Watson) not only acknowledges this, but pays me some compliments upon it, in his answer to the second part of that work. "There is (says he) a philosophical sublimity in some of your ideas, when speaking of the Creator of the Universe."

What then, my much esteemed friend, (for I do not respect you the less because we differ, and that perhaps not much, in religious

sentiments,) what, I ask, is the thing called *infidelity*? If we go back to your ancestors and mine, three or four hundred years ago, for we must have fathers, and grandfathers, or we should not have been here, we shall find them praying to saints and virgins, and believing in purgatory and transubstantiation; and therefore, all of us are infidels according to our forefathers' belief. If we go back to times more ancient, we shall again be infidels according to the belief of some other forefathers.

The case, my friend, is, that the world has been overrun with fable and creed of human invention, with sectaries of whole nations against other nations, and sectaries of those sectaries in each of them against each other. Every sectary, except the Quakers, have been persecutors. Those who fled from persecution, persecuted in their turn, and it is this confusion of creeds that has filled the world with persecution, and deluged it with blood. Even the depredation on your commerce by the Barbary powers, sprang from the crusades of the church against those powers. It was a war of creed against creed, each boasting of God for its author, and reviling each other with the name of infidel. If I do not believe as you believe, it proves that you do not believe as I believe, and this is all that it proves.

There is, however, one point of union wherein all religions meet, and that is the first article of every man's creed, and of every nation's creed, that has any creed at all, *I believe in God*. Those who rest here, and there are millions who do, cannot be wrong as far as their creed goes. Those who choose to go farther *may be wrong*, for it is impossible that all can be right, since there is so much contradiction among them. The first, therefore, are, in my opinion, on the safest side.

I presume you are so far acquainted with ecclesiastical history as to know, and the bishop who has answered me has been obliged to acknowledge the fact, that the Books that compose the New Testament, were voted by *yeas* and *nays* to be the Word of God, as you now vote a law, by the Popish Councils of Nice and Laodocia, about fourteen hundred and fifty years ago. With respect to the fact there is no dispute, neither do I mention it for the sake of controversy. This vote may appear authority enough to some, and not authority enough to others. It is proper, however, that every body should know the fact.

With respect to the Age of Reason, which you so much con-

demn, and that, I believe, without having read it, for you say only that you *heard* of it, I will inform you of a circumstance, because you cannot know it by other means.

I have said in the first page of the first part of that work, that it had long been my intention to publish my thoughts upon religion, but that I had reserved it to a later time of life. I have now to inform you why I wrote it, and published it at the time I did.

In the first place, I saw my life in continual danger. My friends were falling as fast as the guillotine could cut their heads off, and as I expected every day the same fate, I resolved to begin my work. I appeared to myself to be on my death bed, for death was on every side of me, and I had no time to lose. This accounts for my writing at the time I did, and so nicely did the time and intention meet, that I had not finished the first part of the work more than six hours before I was arrested and taken to prison. Joel Barlow was with me, and knows the fact.

In the second place, the people of France were running headlong into atheism, and I had the work translated and published in their own language, to stop them in that career, and fix them to the first article (as I have before said) of every man's creed, who has any creed at all, *I believe in God*. I endangered my own life, in the first place, by opposing in the Convention the executing of the king, and laboring to show they were trying the monarch and not the man, and that the crimes imputed to him were the crimes of the monarchical system; and endangered it a second time by opposing atheism, and yet *some* of your priests, for I do not believe that all are perverse, cry out, in the *war-whoop* of monarchical priestcraft, what an infidel! what a wicked man is Thomas Paine! They might as well add, for he believes in God, and is against shedding blood.

But all this *war-whoop* of the pulpit has some concealed object. Religion is not the cause, but it is the stalking horse. They put it forward to conceal themselves behind it. It is not a secret that there has been a party composed of the leaders of the Federalists, for I do not include all Federalists with their leaders, who have been working by various means for several years past, to overturn the Federal Constitution established on the representative system, and place government in the new world on the corrupt system of the old. To accomplish this, a large standing army was necessary, and as a pretence for such an army, the danger of a foreign inva-

sion must be bellowed forth, from the pulpit, from the press, and by their public orators.

I am not of a disposition inclined to suspicion. It is in its nature a mean and cowardly passion, and upon the whole, even admitting error into the case, it is better, I am sure it is more generous to be wrong on the side of confidence, than on the side of suspicion. But I know as a fact, that the English Government distributes annually fifteen hundred pounds sterling among the Presbyterian ministers in England, and one hundred among those of Ireland;* and when I hear of the strange discourses of some of your ministers and professors of colleges I cannot, as the Quakers say, find freedom in my mind to acquit them. Their anti-revolutionary doctrines invite suspicion, even against one's will, and in spite of one's charity to believe well of them.

As you have given me one Scripture phrase, I will give you another for those ministers. It is said in Exodus, chapter xxiii. verse 28, "Thou shalt not revile the Gods, nor curse the ruler of thy people." But those ministers, such I mean as Dr. Emmons, curse ruler and people both, for the majority are, politically, the people, and it is those who have chosen the ruler whom they curse.

As to the first part of the verse, that of *not reviling the Gods*, it makes no part of my Scripture: I have but one God.

Since I began this letter, for I write it by piecemeals as I have leisure, I have seen the four letters that passed between you and John Adams. In your first letter you say. "Let divines and philosophers, statesmen and patriots, unite their endeavors to *renovate the age*, by inculcating in the minds of youth: *the fear and love of the Deity and universal philanthropy*." Why; my dear friend, this is exactly *my* religion, and is the whole of it. That you may have an idea that the Age of Reason (for I believe you have not read it) inculcates this reverential fear and love of Deity, I will give you a paragraph from it.

"Do we want to contemplate his power? We see it in the immensity of the Creation. Do we want to contemplate his wisdom? We see it in the unchangeable order by which the incomprehensible whole is governed. Do we want to contemplate his munificence? We see it in the abundance with which he fills the earth. Do we

* There must undoubtedly be a very gross mistake in respect to the amount said to be expended; the sums intended to be expressed were probably fifteen hundred thousand and one hundred thousand pounds.—ED.

want to contemplate his mercy? We see it in his not withholding that abundance even from the unthankful."

As I am fully with you in your first part, that respecting the Deity, so am I in your second, that of *universal philanthropy*; by which I do not mean merely the sentimental benevolence of wishing well, but the practical benevolence of doing good. We cannot serve the Deity in the manner we serve those who cannot do without that service. He needs no services from us. We can add nothing to eternity. But it is in our power to render a service *acceptable* to him, and that is, not by praying, but by endeavoring to make his creatures happy. A man does not serve God when he prays, for it is himself he is trying to serve; and as to hiring or paying men to pray, as if the Deity needed instruction, it is in my opinion an abomination. One good school-master is of more use and of more value than a load of such parsons as Dr. Emmons, and some others.

You, my dear and much respected friend, are now far in the vale of years; I have yet, I believe, some years in store, for I have a good state of health and a happy mind: I take care of both, by nourishing the first with temperance, and the latter with abundance.

This I believe you will allow to be the true philosophy of life. You will see by my third letter to the citizens of the United States, that I have been exposed to, and preserved through many dangers; but, instead of buffeting the Deity with prayers, as if I distrusted him, or must dictate to him, I reposed myself on his protection: and you, my friend, will find, even in your last moments, more consolation in the silence of resignation than in the murmuring wish of prayer.

In every thing which you say in your second letter to John Adams, respecting our rights as men and citizens in this world, I am perfectly with you. On other points we have to answer to our Creator and not to each other. The key of heaven is not in the keeping of any sect, nor ought the road to it to be obstructed by any. Our relation to each other in this world is, as men, and the man who is a friend to man and to his rights, let his religious opinions be what they may, is a good citizen, to whom I can give, as I ought to do, and as every other ought, the right hand of fellowship, and to none with more hearty good will, my dear friend, than to you.

THOMAS PAINE.

Federal City, Jan. 1, 1803.

NOTE.

The Editor cannot resist the inclination, to give the following quotation from the Bishop of Llandaff, after the foregoing letters.

“It would give me much uneasiness to be reputed an enemy to free inquiry in religious matters, or as capable of being animated into any degree of personal malevolence, against those who differ from me in opinion. On the contrary, I look upon the right of private judgment, in every concern respecting God and ourselves, as superior to the control of human authority; and have ever regarded free discussion as the best means of illustrating the doctrine, and establishing the truth of Christianity. Let the followers of Mahomet, and the zealots of the Church of Rome, support their several religious systems, by damping every effort of the human intellect to pry into the foundations of their faith! but never can it become a Christian to be afraid of being asked a reason of the faith that is in him; nor a protestant to be studious of enveloping his religion in mystery and ignorance; nor the Church of England, to abandon that moderation by which she permits every individual, *et sentire quæ velit, et quæ sentiat dicere.*”

L E T T E R V I I I .

It is always the interest of a far greater part of the nation to have a thing right than to have it wrong ; and, therefore, in a country whose government is founded on the system of election and representation, the fate of every party is decided by its principles.

As this system is the only form and principle of government by which liberty can be preserved, and the only one that can embrace all the varieties of a great extent of country, it necessarily follows, that to have the representation real, the election must be real ; and that where the election is a fiction, the representation is a fiction also. *Like will always produce like.*

A great deal has been said and written concerning the conduct of Mr. Burr, during the late contest, in the federal legislature, whether Mr. Jefferson or Mr. Burr should be declared President of the United States. Mr. Burr has been accused of intriguing to obtain the Presidency. Whether this charge be substantiated or not, makes little or no part of the purport of this letter. There is a point of much higher importance to attend to than any thing that relates to the individual, Mr. Burr : for the great point is not whether Mr. Burr has intrigued, but whether the legislature has intrigued with *him*.

Mr. Ogden, a relation of one of the senators of New Jersey, of the same name, and of the party assuming the style of federalists, has written a letter published in the New York papers, signed with his name, the purport of which is to exculpaate Mr. Burr from the charges brought against him. In this letter he says,

“ When about to return from Washington, two or three *members of Congress* of the federal party spoke to me of *their views*, as to the election of a president, desiring me to converse with Colonel Burr on the subject, and to ascertain *whether he would enter into terms*. On my return to New York, I called on Colonel Burr, and communicated the above to him. He explicitly declined the explanation, and did neither propose nor agree to any terms.”

How nearly is human cunning allied to folly ! The animals to whom nature has given the faculty we call *cunning*, know always when to use it, and use it wisely ; but when man descends to cunning, he blunders and betrays.

Mr. Ogden's letter is intended to exculpaate Mr. Burr from the

charge of intriguing to obtain the presidency ; and the letter that he (Ogden) writes for this purpose, is direct evidence against his party in Congress, that they intrigued with Burr to obtain him for President, and employed him (Ogden) for the purpose. To save Aaron, he betrays Moses, and then turns informer against the *Golden Calf*.

It is but of little importance to the world to know if Mr. Burr *listened* to an intriguing proposal, but it is of great importance to the constituents to know if their representatives in Congress made one. The ear can commit no crime, but the tongue may ; and therefore the right policy is to drop Mr. Burr as being only the hearer, and direct the whole charge against the federal faction in Congress as the active original culprit, or, if the priests will have scripture for it, as the serpent that beguiled Eve.

The plot of the intrigue was to make Mr. Burr President, on the private condition of his agreeing to, and entering into, terms with them, that is, with the proposers. Had then this election been made, the country, knowing nothing of this private and illegal transaction, would have supposed, for who could have supposed otherwise, that it had a President according to the forms, principles, and intention of the constitution. No such thing. Every form, principle, and intention of the constitution would have been violated ; and instead of a President, it would have had a mute, a sort of image, hand-bound and tongue-tied, the dupe and slave of a party, placed on the theatre of the United States, and acting the farce of President.

It is of little importance, in a constitutional sense, to know what the terms to be proposed might be, because any terms other than those which the constitution prescribes to a President is criminal. Neither do I see how Mr. Burr, or any other person put in the same condition, could have taken the oath prescribed by the constitution to a President, which is, "*I do solemnly swear, (or affirm,) that I will faithfully execute the office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my ability preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States.*"

How, I ask, could such a person have taken such an oath, knowing at the same time that he had entered into the Presidency on terms unknown in the constitution, and private, and which would deprive him of the freedom and power of acting as President of the United States, agreeably to his constitutional oath ?

Mr. Burr, by not agreeing to terms, has escaped the danger to which they exposed him, and the perjury that would have followed, and also the punishment annexed thereto. Had he accepted the Presidency on terms unknown in the constitution, and private, and had the transaction afterwards transpired, (which it most probably would, for roguery is a thing difficult to conceal,) it would have produced a sensation in the country too violent to be quieted, and too just to be resisted; and in any case the election must have been void.

But what are we to think of those members of Congress, who having taken an oath of the same constitutional import as the oath of the President, violate that oath by tampering to obtain a President on private conditions. If this is not sedition against the constitution and the country, it is difficult to define what sedition in a representative can be.

Say not that this statement of the case is the effect of personal or party resentment. No. It is the effect of *sincere concern*, that such corruption, of which this is but a sample, should, in the space of a few years, have crept into a country, that had the fairest opportunity that Providence ever gave, within the knowledge of history, of making itself an illustrious example to the world.

What the terms were, or were to be, it is probable we never shall know; or what is more probable, that feigned ones, if any, will be given. But from the conduct of the party since that time, we may conclude, that no taxes would have been taken off, that the clamor for war would have been kept up, new expenses incurred, and taxes and offices increased in consequence; and among the articles of a private nature, that the leaders in this seditious traffic were to stipulate with the mock President for lucrative appointments for themselves.

But if these plotters against the constitution understood their business, and they had been plotting long enough to be masters of it, a single article would have comprehended every thing, which is,

That the President (thus made) should be governed in all cases whatsoever by a private junto appointed by themselves.

They could then, through the medium of a mock President, have negatived all bills which the party in Congress could not have opposed with success, and reduced representation to a nullity.

The country has been imposed upon, and the real culprits are

but few; and as it is necessary for the peace, harmony, and honor of the Union, to separate the deceiver from the deceived, the betrayer from the betrayed, that men who once were friends, and that in the worst of times, should be friends again, it is necessary, as a beginning, that that this dark business be brought to full investigation. Ogden's letter is direct evidence of the fact of tampering to obtain a conditional President. He knows the two or three members of Congress that commissioned him, and they know who commissioned them.

THOMAS PAINE

Federal City, Lovett's Hotel,
Jan. 29th, 1803.

LETTER IX.

The malignant mind, like the jaundiced eye, sees every thing through a false medium of its own creating. The light of heaven appears stained with yellow to the distempered sight of the one; and the fairest actions have the form of crimes in the venom'd imagination of the other.

For several months, both before and after my return to America, in October last, the apostate papers, styling themselves federal, were filled with paragraphs and essays respecting a letter from Mr. Jefferson to me at Paris, and though none of them knew the contents of the letter, nor the occasion of writing it, malignity taught them to suppose it, and the lying tongue of injustice lent them its aid.

That the public may be no longer imposed upon by federal apostacy, I will now publish the letter, and the occasion of its being written.

The treaty negotiated in England by John Jay, and ratified by the Washington administration, had so disgracefully surrendered the right and freedom of the American flag, that all the commerce of the United States on the ocean became exposed to capture, and suffered in consequence of it. The duration of the treaty was limited to two years after the war; and consequently, America could not, during that period, relieve herself from the chains which that treaty had fixed upon her.

This being the case, the only relief that could come must arise

out of something originating in Europe, that would, in its consequences, extend to America. It had long been my opinion that commerce contained within itself the means of its own protection; but as the time for bringing forward any new system is not always happening, it is necessary to watch its approach, and lay hold of it before it passes away.

As soon as the late Emperor Paul of Russia abandoned his coalition with England, and became a neutral power, this crisis of time, and also of circumstances, was then arriving; and I employed it in arranging a plan for the protection of the commerce of neutral nations during war, that might, in its operation and consequences, relieve the commerce of America. The plan, with the pieces accompanying it, consisted of about forty pages. The Citizen Bonneville, with whom I lived in Paris, translated it into French. Mr. Skipwith, the American consul, Joel Barlow, and myself, had the translation printed and distributed as a present to the foreign ministers of all the neutral nations then resident in Paris. This was in the summer of 1800.

It was entitled Maritime Compact (in French *Pacte Maritime*.) The plan, exclusive of the pieces that accompanied it, consisted of the following preamble and articles.

MARITIME COMPACT.

Being an Unarmed Association of Nations for the protection of the rights and commerce of Nations that shall be neutral in time of war.

Whereas, the vexations and injuries to which the rights and commerce of neutral nations have been, and continue to be, exposed during the time of maritime war, render it necessary to establish a law of nations for the purpose of putting an end to such vexations and injuries, and to guarantee to the neutral nations the exercise of their just rights.

We, therefore, the undersigned powers, form ourselves into an association, and establish the following as a law of nations on the seas.

ARTICLE I.

Definition of the rights of neutral nations.

The rights of nations, such as are exercised by them in their intercourse with each other in time of peace, are, and of right ought to be, the rights of neutral nations at all times; because,

First, Those rights not having been abandoned by them, remain with them.

Secondly, Because those rights cannot become forfeited or void, in consequence of war breaking out between two or more other nations.

A war of nation against nation being exclusively the act of the nations that make the war, and not the act of the neutral nations, cannot, whether considered in itself or in its consequences, destroy or diminish the rights of the nations remaining in peace.

ARTICLE II.

The ships and vessels of nations that rest neuter and at peace with the world during a war with other nations, have a right to navigate freely on the seas as they navigated before that war broke out, and to proceed to and enter the port or ports of any of the belligerent powers, *with the consent of that power*, without being seized, searched, visited, or any ways interrupted, by the nation or nations with which that nation is at war.

ARTICLE III.

For the conservation of the aforesaid rights, *we*, the undersigned powers, engaging to each other our sacred faith and honor, declare,

That if any belligerent power shall seize, search, visit, or any ways interrupt any ship or vessel belonging to the citizens or subjects of any of the powers composing this association, then each and all of the said undersigned powers will cease to import, and will not permit to be imported into the ports or dominions of any of the said undersigned powers, in any ship or vessel whatever, any goods, wares, or merchandize, produced or manufactured in, or exported from, the dominions of the power so offending against the association hereby established and proclaimed.

ARTICLE IV.

That all the ports appertaining to any and all of the powers composing this association shall be shut against the flag of the offending nation.

any of the powers composing this association, to the citizens or subjects of the offending nation, for the term of one year, or until reparation be made. The reparation to be _____ times the amount of the damages sustained.

ARTICLE VI.

If any ship or vessel appertaining to any of the citizens or subjects of any of the powers composing this association shall be seized, searched, visited, or interrupted, by any belligerent nation, or be forcibly prevented entering the port of her destination, or be seized, searched, visited, or interrupted, in coming out of such port, or be forcibly prevented from proceeding to any new destination, or be insulted or visited by any agent from on board any vessel of any belligerent power, the government or executive power of the nation to which the ship or vessel so seized, searched, visited, or interrupted belongs, shall, on evidence of the fact, make public proclamation of the same, and send a copy thereof to the government, or executive, of each of the powers composing this association, who shall publish the same in all the extent of his dominions, together with a declaration, that at the expiration of _____ days after publication, the final articles of this association shall be put in execution against the offending nation.

ARTICLE VII.

If reparation be not made within the space of one year, the said proclamation shall be renewed for one year more, and so on.

ARTICLE VIII.

The association chooses for itself a flag to be carried at the mast head conjointly with the national flag of each nation composing this association.

The flag of the association shall be composed of the same colors as compose the rainbow, and arranged in the same order as they appear in that phenomenon.

ARTICLE IX.

And whereas, it may happen that one or more of the nations composing this association may be, at the time of forming it, engaged in war, or become so in future, in that case, the ships and vessels of such nation shall carry the flag of the association bound

round the mast, to denote that the nation to which she belongs is a member of the association and a respecter of the laws.

N. B. This distinction in the manner of carrying the flag is merely for the purpose, that neutral vessels having the flag at the mast head, may be known at first sight.

ARTICLE X.

And whereas, it is contrary to the moral principles of neutrality and peace, that any neutral nation should furnish to the belligerent powers, or any of them, the means of carrying on war against each other ; we, therefore, the powers composing this association, declare that we will, each one for itself, prohibit in our dominions the exportation or transportation of military stores, comprehending gunpowder, cannon, and cannon balls, fire arms of all kinds, and all kinds of iron and steel weapons used in war, excluding therefrom all kinds of utensils and instruments used in civil or domestic life, and every other article that cannot, in its immediate state, be employed in war.

Having thus declared the moral motives of the foregoing article, we declare also the civil and political intentions thereof, to wit :

That as belligerent nations have no right to visit or search any ship or vessel belonging to a nation at peace, and under the protection of the laws and government thereof, and as all such visit or search is an insult to the nation to which such ship or vessel belongs, and to the government of the same, we, therefore, the powers composing this association, will take the right of prohibition on ourselves, to whom it properly belongs, and by whom only it can be legally exercised, and not permit foreign nations, in a state of war, to usurp the right of legislating, by proclamation, for any of the citizens or subjects of the powers composing this association.

It is, therefore, in order to take away all pretence of search or visit, which, by being offensive, might become a new cause of war, that we will provide laws, and publish them by proclamation, each in his own dominion, to prohibit the supplying, or carrying to, the belligerent powers, or either of them, the military stores, or articles before mentioned, annexing thereto a penalty to be levied or inflicted upon any persons within our several dominions, transgressing the same. And we invite all persons, as well of the belligerent nations as of our own, or any other, to give information of any knowledge they may have of any transgression against the said law, that the offenders may be prosecuted.

By this conduct we restore the word contraband [*contra* and *ban*] to its true and original signification, which means against law edict, or proclamation; and none but the government of a nation can have, or can exercise, the right of making laws, edicts, or proclamations, for the conduct of its citizens or subjects.

Now we, the undersigned powers, declare the aforesaid articles to be a law of nations, at all times, or until a congress of nations shall meet to form some law more effectual.

And we do recommend that immediately on the breaking out of war between any two or more nations, that deputies be appointed by all the neutral nations, whether members of this association or not, to meet in congress, in some central place, to take cognizance of any violations of the rights of neutral nations.

Signed, &c.

For the purpose of giving operation to the aforesaid plan of an unarmed association, the following paragraph was subjoined:

It may be judged proper for the order of business, that the association of nations have a President for a term of years, and the Presidency to pass by rotation, to each of the parties composing the association.

In that case, and for the sake of regularity, the first President to be the executive power of the most northerly nation composing the association, and his deputy or minister at the congress to be President of the congress, and the next most northerly to be Vice-President, who shall succeed to the Presidency, and so on. The line determining the geographical situation of each to be the latitude of the capital of each nation.

If this method be adopted, it will be proper that the first President be nominally constituted in order to give rotation to the rest. In that case the following article might be added to the foregoing, viz. "The constitution of the association nominates the Emperor Paul to be first President of the association of nations for the protection of neutral commerce, and the securing the freedom of the seas."

The foregoing plan, as I have before mentioned, was presented to the ministers of all neutral nations then in Paris, in the summer of 1800. Six copies were given to the Russian general Springporten; and a Russian gentleman who was going to St. Petersburg took two, expressly for the purpose of putting them into the hands of Paul. I sent the original manuscript, in my own hand-writing,

to Mr. Jefferson, and also wrote him four letters, dated the 1st, 4th, 6th, and 16th of October, 1800, giving him an account of what was then going on in Europe, respecting neutral commerce.

The case was, that in order to compel the English government to acknowledge the rights of neutral commerce, and that free ships make free goods, the Emperor Paul, in the month of September following the publication of the plan, shut all the ports of Russia against England. Sweden and Denmark did the same by their ports, and Denmark shut up Hamburgh. Prussia shut up the Elbe and the Weser. The ports of Spain, Portugal, and Naples were shut up, and in general, all the ports of Italy, except Venice, which the Emperor of Germany held, and had it not been for the untimely death of Paul, a law of nations, founded on the authority of nations, for establishing the rights of neutral commerce and the freedom of the seas, would have been proclaimed, and the government of England must have consented to that law, or the nation must have lost its commerce: and the consequence to America would have been, that such a law would in a great measure, if not entirely, have released her from the injuries of Jay's treaty.

Of all these matters I informed Mr. Jefferson. This was before he was President, and the letter he wrote me after he was President was in answer to those I had written to him, and the manuscript copy of the plan I had sent him. Here follows the letter.

Washington, March 18th, 1801.

Dear Sir:

Your letters of Oct. 1st, 4th, 6th, and 16th, came duly to hand, and the papers which they covered were, according to your permission, published in the newspapers, and in a pamphlet, and under your own name.* These papers contain precisely our principles, and I hope they will be generally recognized here. Determined as we are to avoid, if possible, wasting the energies of our people in war and destruction, we shall avoid implicating ourselves with the powers of Europe, even in support of principles which we mean to pursue. They have so many other interests different from ours, that we must avoid being entangled in them. We believe we can enforce those principles as to ourselves by peaceable means, now

* The plan, with the papers accompanying it, were published by S. H. Smith, of the Federal City.

that we are likely to have our public councils detached from foreign views. The return of our citizens from the phrenzy into which they had been wrought, partly by ill conduct in France, partly by artifices practiced upon them, is almost entire, and will, I believe, become quite so. But these details, too minute and long for a letter, will be better developed by Mr. Dawson, the bearer of this, a member of the late congress, to whom I refer you for them. He goes in the Maryland sloop of war, which will wait a few days at Havre to receive his letters to be written on his arrival at Paris. You expressed a wish to get a passage to this country in a public vessel. Mr. Dawson is charged with orders to the captain of the Maryland to receive, and accommodate you back if you can be ready to depart at such a short warning. Rob. R. Livingston is appointed minister plenipotentiary to the republic of France, but will not leave this, till we receive the ratification of the convention by Mr. Dawson. I am in hopes you will find us returned generally to sentiments worthy of former times. In these it will be your glory to have steadily labored, and with as much effect as any man living. That you may long live to continue your useful labors and to reap the reward in the thankfulness of nations, is my sincere prayer. Accept assurances of my high esteem and affectionate attachments.

TH. JEFFERSON.

This, citizens of the United States, is the letter about which the leaders and tools of the federal faction, without knowing its contents or the occasion of writing it, have wasted so many malignant falsehoods. It is a letter which, on account of its wise economy and peaceable principles, and its forbearance to reproach, will be read by every good man and every good citizen with pleasure, and the faction, mortified at its appearance, will have to regret that they forced it into publication. The least atonement they can now offer is to make the letter as public as they have made their own infamy, and learn to lie no more.

The same injustice they showed to Mr. Jefferson they showed to me. I had employed myself in Europe, and at my own expense, in forming and promoting a plan that would, in its operation, have benefited the commerce of America; and the federal faction here invented and circulated an account in the papers they employ, that I had given a plan to the French for burning all the towns on the

coast from Savannah to Baltimore. Were I to prosecute them for this, and I do not promise that I will not, (for the liberty of the press is not the liberty of lying,) there is not a federal judge, not even one of midnight appointment, but must, from the nature of the case, be obliged to condemn them. The faction, however, cannot complain; they have not been restrained in any thing. They have had their full swing of lying uncontradicted; they have availed themselves, unopposed, of all the arts hypocrisy could devise; and the event has been, what, in all such cases it ever will, and ought to be, *the ruin of themselves*.

The characters of the late and present administrations are now sufficiently marked, and the adherents of each keep up the distinction. The former administration rendered itself notorious by outrage, coxcombical parade, false alarms, a continued increase of taxes, and an unceasing clamor for war; and as every vice has a virtue opposed to it, the present administration moves on the direct contrary line. The question, therefore, at elections, is not properly a question upon persons, but upon principles. Those who are for peace, moderate taxes, and mild government, will vote for the administration that conducts itself upon those principles, in whatever hands that administration may be.

There are in the United States, and particularly in the middle states, several religious sects, whose leading moral principle is PEACE. It is, therefore, impossible that such persons, consistently with the dictates of that principle, can vote for an administration that is clamorous for war. When moral principles, rather than persons, are candidates for power, to vote is to perform a moral duty, and not to vote is to neglect a duty.

That persons who are hunting after places, offices, and contracts, should be advocates for war, taxes, and extravagance, is not to be wondered at; but that so large a portion of the people who had nothing to depend upon but their industry, and no other public prospect but that of paying taxes, and bearing the burden, should be advocates for the same measures, is a thoughtlessness not easily accounted for. But reason is recovering her empire, and the fog of delusion is clearing away.

THOMAS PAINE.

*Bordentown, on the Delaware,
New Jersey, April 21. 1803.*

L E T T E R X.

RELIGION and war is the cry of the federalists; morality and peace the voice of republicans. The union of morality and peace is congenial; but that of religion and war is a paradox, and the solution of it is hypocrisy.

The leaders of the federalists have no judgment; their plans no consistency of parts; and want of consistency is the natural consequence of want of principle.

They exhibit to the world the curious spectacle of an *opposition* without a *cause*, and conduct without system. Were they, as doctors, to prescribe medicine as they practise politics, they would poison their patients with destructive compounds.

There are not two things more opposed to each other than war and religion; and yet, in the double game those leaders have to play, the one is necessarily the theme of their politics, and the other the text of their sermons. The week day orator of Mars, and the Sunday preacher of Federal Grace, play, like gamblers, into each other's hands, and this they call religion.

Though hypocrisy can counterfeit every virtue, and become the associate of every vice, it requires a great dexterity of craft to give it the power of deceiving. A painted sun may glisten but it cannot warm. For hypocrisy to personate virtue successfully it must know and feel what virtue is, and as it cannot long do this it cannot long deceive. When an orator, foaming for war, breathes forth in another sentence a *plaintive piety of words*, he may as well write HYPOCRISY on his front.

The late attempt of the federal leaders in congress (for they acted without the knowledge of their constituents) to plunge the country into war, merits not only reproach, but indignation. It was madness, conceived in ignorance and acted in wickedness. The head and the heart went partners in the crime.

A neglect of punctuality in the performance of a treaty is made a *cause* of war by the *Barbary powers*, and of remonstrance and explanation by *civilized powers*. The Mahometans of Barbary negotiate by the sword—they seize first, and expostulate afterwards; and the federal leaders have been laboring to *barbarize* the United States by adopting the practice of the Barbary states, and this they call honor. Let their honor and their hypocrisy go weep together,

for both are defeated. The present administration is too moral for hypocrites, and too economical for public spendthrifts.

A man, the least acquainted with diplomatic affairs, must know that a neglect in punctuality is not one of the legal causes of war, unless that neglect be confirmed by a refusal to perform; and even then it depends upon circumstances connected with it. The world would be in continual quarrels and war, and commerce be annihilated, if Algerine policy was the law of nations. And were America, instead of becoming an example to the old world of good and moral government and civil manners, or, if they like it better, of gentlemanly conduct towards other nations, to set up the character of ruffian, that of *word and blow, and the blow first*, and thereby give the example of pulling down the little that civilization has gained upon barbarism, her independence, instead of being an honor and a blessing, would become a curse upon the world and upon herself.

The conduct of the Barbary powers, though unjust in principle, is suited to their prejudices, situation, and circumstances. The crusades of the church to exterminate them, fixed in their minds the unobliterated belief that every Christian power was their mortal enemy. Their religious prejudices, therefore, suggest the policy, which their situation and circumstances protect them in. As a people, they are neither commercial nor agricultural, they neither import nor export; have no property floating on the seas, nor ships and cargoes in the ports of foreign nations. No retaliation, therefore, can be acted upon them, and they sin secure from punishment.

But this is not the case with the United States. If she sins as a Barbary power she must answer for it as a civilized one. Her commerce is continually passing on the seas exposed to capture, and her ships and cargoes in foreign ports to detention and reprisal. An act of war committed by her in the Mississippi, would produce a war against the commerce of the Atlantic States, and the latter would have to curse the policy that provoked the former. In every point, therefore, in which the character and interest of the United States be considered, it would ill become her to set an example contrary to the policy and custom of civilized powers, and practised only by the Barbary powers, that of striking before she expostulates.

But can any man, calling himself a legislator, and supposed by his constituents to know something of his duty, be so ignorant as to imagine that seizing on New Orleans would finish the affair or even

contribute towards it. On the contrary it would have made it worse. The treaty right of deposite at New Orleans, and the right of the navigation of the Mississippi into the Gulph of Mexico, are distant things. New Orleans is more than an hundred miles in the country from the mouth of the river, and, as a place of deposite, is of no value if the mouth of the river be shut, which either France or Spain could do, and which our possession of New Orleans could neither prevent or remove. New Orleans in our possession, by an act of hostility, would have become a blockaded port, and consequently of no value to the western people as a place of deposite. Since, therefore, an interruption had arisen to the commerce of the western states, and until the matter could be brought to a fair explanation, it was of less injury to have the port shut and the river open, than to have the river shut and the port in our possession.

That New Orleans could be taken, required no stretch of policy to plan, nor spirit of enterprize to affect. It was like marching behind a man to knock him down: and the dastardly slyness of such an attack would have stained the fame of the United States. Where there is no danger, cowards are bold, and captain Bobadils are to be found in the senate as well as on the stage. Even *Gouverneur*, on such a march, dare have shown a leg.

The people of the western country to whom the Mississippi serves as an inland sea to their commerce, must be supposed to understand the circumstances of that commerce better than a man who is a stranger to it; and as they have shown no approbation of the war-whoop measures of the federal senators, it becomes presumptive evidence they disprove them. This is a new mortification for those war-whoop politicians; for the case is, that finding themselves losing ground and withering away in the Atlantic states, they laid hold of the affair of New Orleans, in the vain hope of rooting and reinforcing themselves in the western states; and they did this without perceiving that it was one of those ill judged hypocritical expedients in politics, that whether it succeeded or failed the event would be the same. Had their motion succeeded, it would have endangered the commerce of the Atlantic states and ruined their reputation there; and on the other hand the attempt to make a tool of the western people was so badly concealed as to extinguish all credit with them.

But hypocrisy is a vice of a sanguine constitution. It flatters and promises itself every thing; and it has yet to learn, with

respect to moral and political reputation it is less dangerous to offend than to deceive.

To the measures of administration, supported by the firmness and integrity of the majority in congress, the United States owe, as far as human means are concerned, the preservation of peace, and of national honor. The confidence which the western people reposed in the government and their representatives is rewarded with success. They are reinstated in their rights with the least possible loss of time; and their harmony with the people of New Orleans, so necessary to the prosperity of the United States, which would have been broken, and the seeds of discord sown in its place, had hostilities been preferred to accommodation, remains unimpaired. Have the federal ministers of the church meditated on these matters? and laying aside, as they ought to do, their electioneering and vindictive prayers and sermons, returned thanks that peace is preserved, and commerce without the stain of blood.

In the pleasing contemplation of this state of things the mind, by comparison, carries itself back to those days of uproar and extravagance that marked the career of the former administration, and decides, by the unstudied impulse of its own feelings, that something must then have been wrong. Why was it, that America, formed for happiness, and remote by situation and circumstances from the troubles and tumults of the European world, became plunged into its vortex and contaminated with its crimes? The answer is easy. Those who were then at the head of affairs were apostates from the principles of the revolution. Raised to an elevation they had not a right to expect, nor judgment to conduct, they became like feathers in the air, and blown about by every puff of passion or conceit.

Candor would find some apology for their conduct if want of judgment was their only defect. But error and crime, though often alike in their features, are distant in their characters and in their origin. The one has its source in the weakness of the head, the other in the badness of the heart, and the coalition of the two, describes the former administration.

Had no injurious consequences arisen from the conduct of that administration, it might have passed for error or imbecility, and been permitted to die and be forgotten. The grave is kind to innocent offence. But even innocence, when it is a cause of injury ought to undergo an inquiry,

The country, during the time of the former administration, was kept in continual agitation and alarm; and that no investigation might be made into its conduct it entrenched itself within a magic circle of terror, and called it a **SEDITION LAW**. Violent and mysterious in its measures and arrogant in its manners, it affected to disdain information, and insulted the principles that raised it from obscurity. John Adams and Timothy Pickering were men whom nothing but the accidents of the times rendered visible on the political horizon. Elevation turned their heads, and public indignation hath cast them to the ground. But an inquiry into the conduct and measures of that administration is nevertheless necessary.

The country was put to great expense. Loans, taxes, and standing armies became the standing order of the day. The militia, said Secretary Pickering, are not to be depended upon, and fifty thousand men must be raised. For what? no cause to justify such measures has yet appeared. No discovery of such a cause has yet been made. The pretended sedition law shut up the sources of investigation, and the precipitate flight of John Adams closed the scene. But the matter ought not to sleep here.

It is not to gratify resentment, or encourage it in others, that I enter upon this subject. It is not in the power of man to accuse me of a persecuting spirit. But some explanation ought to be had. The motives and objects respecting the extraordinary and expensive measures of the former administration ought to be known. The sedition law, that shield of the moment, prevented it then, and justice demands it now. If the public have been imposed upon, it is proper they should know it, for where judgment is to act, or a choice is to be made, knowledge is first necessary. The conciliation of parties, if it does not grow out of explanation, partakes of the character of collusion or indifference.

There has been guilt somewhere; and it is better to fix it where it belongs, and separate the deceiver from the deceived, than that suspicion, the bane of society, should range at large, and sour the public mind. The military measures that were proposed and carrying on during the former administration, could not have for their object the defence of the country against invasion. This is a case that decides itself; for it is self evident, that while the war raged in Europe, neither France nor England could spare a man to send to America. The object, therefore, must be something at home, and that something was the overthrow of the representative

system of government, for it could be nothing else. But the plotters got into confusion and became enemies to each other. Adams hated and was jealous of Hamilton, and Hamilton hated and despised both Adams and Washington. Surly Timothy stood aloof, as he did at the affair of Lexington, and the part that fell to the public was to pay the expense.

But ought a people who, but a few years ago, were fighting the battles of the world, for liberty had no home but here, ought such a people to stand quietly by and see that liberty undermined by apostacy and overthrown by intrigue? Let the tombs of the slain recall their recollection, and the forethought of what their children are to be, revive and fix in their hearts the love of liberty.

If the former administration can justify its conduct, give it the opportunity. The manner in which John Adams disappeared from the government renders an inquiry the more necessary. He gave some account of himself, lame and confused as it was, to certain *eastern wise men* who came to pay homage to him on his birthday. But if he thought it necessary to do this, ought he not to have rendered an account to the public. They had a right to expect it of him. In that *tete a tete* account, he says, "Some measures were the effect of imperious necessity, much against my inclination." What measures does Mr. Adams mean, and what is the imperious necessity to which he alludes? "Others (says he) were measures of the legislature, which, although approved when passed, were never previously proposed or recommended by me." What measures, it may be asked, were those, for the public have a right to know the conduct of their representatives? "Some (says he) left to my discretion were never executed, because no necessity for them, in my judgment, ever occurred."

What does this dark apology, mixed with accusation, amount to, but to increase and confirm the suspicion that something was wrong? Administration only was possessed of foreign official information, and it was only upon that information communicated by him publicly or privately, or to congress, that congress could act, and it is not in the power of Mr. Adams to show, from the condition of the belligerent powers, that any imperious necessity called for the warlike and expensive measures of his administration.

What the correspondence between administration and Rufus King in London, or Quincy Adams in Holland, or Berlin, might be, is but little known. The public papers have told us that the former

became cup-bearer from the London underwriters to captain Truxton, for which, as minister from a neutral nation, he ought to have been censured. It is, however a feature that marks the politics of the minister, and hints at the character of the correspondence.

I know that it is the opinion of several members of both houses of congress, that an inquiry, with respect to the conduct of the late administration, ought to be gone into. The convulsed state into which the country has been thrown, will be best settled by a full and fair exposition of the conduct of that administration, and the causes and object of that conduct. To be deceived, or to remain deceived, can be the interest of no man who seeks the public good ; and it is the deceiver only, or one interested in the deception, that can wish to preclude enquiry.

The suspicion against the late administration is, that it was plotting to overturn the representative system of government, and that it spread alarms of invasions that had no foundation, as a pretence for raising and establishing a military force as the means of accomplishing that object.

The law, called the sedition law, enacted, that " If any person should write or publish, or cause to be written or published, any libel (without defining what a libel is) against the government of the United States, or either houses of congress, or against the president, he should be punished by a fine not exceeding two thousand dollars, and by imprisonment not exceeding two years."

But it is a much greater crime for a president to plot against a constitution and the liberties of the people, than for an individual to plot against a president ; and consequently, John Adams is accountable to the public for his conduct, as the individuals under his administration were to the sedition law.

The object, however, of an enquiry, in this case, is not to punish, but to satisfy ; and to show, by example, to future administrations, that an abuse of power and trust, however disguised by appearances, or rendered plausible by pretence, is one time or other to be accounted for.

THOMAS PAINE.

*Bordentown, on the Delaware,
New Jersey, March 12, 1803.*

THE WILL OF THOMAS PAINE.

The People of the State of New York, by the Grace of God, Free and Independent, to all to whom these presents shall come, or may concern, SEND GREETING :

KNOW YE, That the annexed is a true copy of the Will of THOMAS PAINE, deceased, as recorded in the office of the surrogate, in and for the city and county of New York. In testimony whereof, we have caused the seal of office of our said surrogate to be hereunto affixed. Witness, Silvanus Miller, Esq., surrogate of said county, at the city of New York, the twelfth day of July, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and nine, and of our Independence the thirty-fourth.

SILVANUS MILLER.

The last Will and Testament of me, the subscriber, Thomas Paine, reposing confidence in my Creator God, and in no other being, for I know of no other, nor believe in any other. I, Thomas Paine, of the State of New York, author of the work entitled *Common Sense*, written in Philadelphia, in 1775, and published in that city the beginning of January, 1776, which awaked America to a declaration of Independence on the fourth of July following, which was as fast as the work could spread through such an extensive country; author also of the several numbers of the *American Crisis*, thirteen in all; published occasionally during the progress of the revolutionary war—the last is on the peace; author also of *Rights of Man*, parts the first and second, written and published in London, in 1791 and 1792; author also of a work on religion, *Age of Reason*, parts the first and second. N. B. I have a third part by me in manuscript, and an answer to the bishop of Llandaff; author also of a work, lately published, entitled *Examination of the Passages in the New Testament, Quoted from the Old, and called Prophecies concerning Jesus Christ, and showing there are no Prophecies of any such Person*; author also of several other works not here enumerated, *Dissertations on First Principles of Government*,—*Decline and Fall of the English System of Finance*—*Agrarian Justice*, &c. &c.; make this my last Will and Testament, that is to say: I give and bequeath to my executors hereinafter appointed, Walter Morton and Thomas Addis Emmet, thirty shares I hold in the New York Phoenix Insurance Company, which

cost me fourteen hundred and seventy dollars, they are worth now upwards of fifteen hundred dollars, and all my moveable effects, and also the money that may be in my trunk or elsewhere at the time of my decease, paying thereout the expenses of my funeral, IN TRUST as to the said shares, moveables, and money for Margaret Brazier Bonneville, wife of Nicholas Bonneville, of Paris, for her own sole and separate use, and at her own disposal, notwithstanding her coverture. As to my farm in New Rochelle, I give, devise, and bequeath the same to my said executors, Walter Morton and Thomas Addis Emmet, and to the survivor of them, his heirs and assigns forever, IN TRUST nevertheless, to sell and dispose of the north side thereof, now in the occupation of Andrew A. Dean, beginning at the west end of the orchard, and running in a line with the land sold to — Coles, to the end of the farm, and to apply the money arising from such sale as hereinafter directed. I give to my friends Walter Morton, of the New York Phoenix Insurance Company, and Thomas Addis Emmet, Counsellor at Law, late of Ireland, two hundred dollars each, and one hundred dollars to Mrs. Palmer, widow of Elihu Palmer, late of New York, to be paid out of the money arising from said sale; and I give the remainder of the money arising from that sale, one half thereof to Clio Rickman, of High or Upper Mary-le-Bone Street, London, and the other half to Nicholas Bonneville, of Paris, husband of Margaret B. Bonneville, aforesaid: and as to the south part of the said farm, containing upwards of one hundred acres, in trust to rent out the same, or otherwise put it to profit, as shall be found most adviseable, and to pay the rents and profits thereof to the said Margaret B. Bonneville, in trust for her children, Benjamin Bonneville, and Thomas Bonneville, their education and maintenance, until they come to the age of twenty-one years, in order that she may bring them well up, give them good and useful learning, and instruct them in their duty to God, and the practice of morality, the rent of the land, or the interest of the money for which it may be sold, as hereinafter mentioned, to be employed in their education. And after the youngest of the said children shall have arrived at the age of twenty-one years, in further trust to convey the same to the said children, share and share alike, in fee simple. But if it shall be thought advisable by my executors and executrix, or the survivors of them, at any time before the youngest of the said children shall come of age, to sell and dispose of the said south side of the said

farm, in that case I hereby authorize and empower my said executors to sell and dispose of the same, and I direct that the money arising from such sale be put into stock, either in the United States Bank stock, or New York Phoenix Insurance Company stock, the interest or dividends thereof to be applied as is already directed for the education and maintenance of the said children, and the principal to be transferred to the said children, or the survivor of them, on his or their coming of age. I know not if the society of people, called Quakers, admit a person to be buried in their burying ground, who does not belong to their society, but if they do, or will admit me, I would prefer being buried there; my father belonged to that profession, and I was partly brought up in it. But if it is not consistent with their rules to do this, I desire to be buried on my own farm at New Rochelle. The place where I am to be buried, to be a square of twelve feet, to be enclosed with rows of trees, and a stone or post and rail fence, with a headstone with my name and age engraved upon it, author of *Common Sense*. I nominate, constitute, and appoint Walter Morton, of the New York Phoenix Insurance Company, and Thomas Addis Emmet, Counsellor at Law, late of Ireland, and Margaret B. Bonneville, executors and executrix to this my last Will and Testament, requesting the said Walter Morton and Thomas Addis Emmet, that they will give what assistance they conveniently can to Mrs. Bonneville, and see that the children be well brought up. Thus placing confidence in their friendship, I herewith take my final leave of them and of the world. I have lived an honest and useful life to mankind; my time has been spent in doing good, and I die in perfect composure and resignation to the will of my Creator, God. Dated the eighteenth day of January, in the year one thousand eight hundred and nine; and I have also signed my name to the other sheet of this Will, in testimony of its being a part thereof.

THOMAS PAINE.

Signed, sealed, published, and declared by the testator, in our presence, who, at his request, and in the presence of each other, have set our names as witnesses thereto, the words "published and declared" first interlined.

WM. KEESE,
JAMES ANGEVINE,
CORNELIUS RYDER.

EPITAPH FOR THE TOMB OF
THOMAS PAINE.

WRITTEN BY A FRIEND.

Here moulders in this dusk abode,
One who to faith no homage show'd:
By moral law his life he tried,
While social duty was his guide,
And pure philanthropy the end
Of all he did or could intend.

Prayer he pronounced impiety,
Vain prompter of divine decree:
That oft implores, with erring zeal,
For boons subversive of its weal;
Yet he retained a grateful sense,
Of bountiful Omnipotence;
Nor blushed with reverence to own,
That blessings spring from God alone.

Thus unappall'd, he sunk to rest,
To rise or lie as heaven thought best:
Yet future hope he did not wave,
Nor mercy for transgressions crave,
The God who gave him life will save.*

* THOMAS PAINE was born at Thetford, in England, on the 29th day of January, 1737, and died at New York, on the 8th of June, 1809, aged a little over seventy-two years and four months.

Advertisement.

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Our past course must be a guaranty for the future, and we shall, to the best of our ability and means, seek to open the public mind to the discussion of those vital questions of reform which affect the welfare of man.

We hold that religious bondage is unworthy of the human mind, and in place of it we shall strive to substitute the empire of reason and enlightened self-interest.

THE BOSTON INVESTIGATOR.

We hold religious fear to be a base, degrading restraint upon the human will; and in place of it would substitute the true, manly motive, — the love of virtue and right, for their own merits.

We hold the present wanton expenditure of capital in religious fanaticism and profligacy to be inconsistent, criminal, worse than useless; and in place of it would substitute a systematic course of benevolence and universal education.

We hold that LABOR should be emancipated from its degrading vassalage to Capital; that all Legislation in favor of Capital and against LABOR should be immediately rescinded.

We hold that the present systems of Banking and Landholding constitute two of the most accursed monopolies that were ever invented to defraud the laboring classes of "wealth, liberty, and life."

We hold that the Bible, being the source of religious faiths, is also the source of social abuses, which now hang like a millstone upon the neck of society; and that there will be no social concord, no true principle of fraternity in society, while one class are set up as God's elect, and another set down as God's vilest reprobates.

We hold that society can never be entirely purged of its abuses, of its monopolies, of its cruel and despotic customs, until the Bible and its slave-holding, man-debasing, rum-distilling, war-sanctioning, and its gallows-blessing churches, are cast together into the sea of — oblivion.

For all that pertains to the welfare of humanity; for all that tends to alleviate the burdens of labor; for all that tends to enlighten and reform; for all that tends to increase happiness and lessen misery; to promote good and discourage evil; and, above all, for FREE DISCUSSION, tempered with brotherly love, the INVESTIGATOR shall ever continue the unflinching advocate. And in our war upon abuses, of whatever nature, we shall uniformly endeavor to make the proper distinction between error and the erring — between the sin and the sinner; always regarding our own conviction of right and wrong as the only guide, and measuring that right and wrong by the utility and happiness they produce or prevent.

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THE BOSTON INVESTIGATOR.

assured that no pains will be spared to render it in future all that they can desire, and, as in times past, much more than its comparatively limited patronage will justify.

A great many Liberals do not know even yet that such a paper is in existence, and others who do know, but have not seen it, know it only by the slanderous reports of its enemies. We wish to place the INVESTIGATOR before these two classes, that they may examine it for themselves; but, as we can of course know only a very few of them, we must mainly depend *upon our friends* to do this work for us. Some are in the habit of doing this, and obtain thereby a number of new subscribers. We appreciate such kindness most sensibly, for we know by experience, that in our unpopular movement the man who lends us a helping hand is no "summer soldier nor sunshine patriot," but a brother who stands to his post, blow high or low, and looks the tempest in the teeth. We have many such men on our list, and we are proud to be in such company. To them and to all other Liberals, whether old friends or new, we would say, that it will be our constant and earnest endeavor to render the INVESTIGATOR as good as it has been, and as much better as we can possibly make it.

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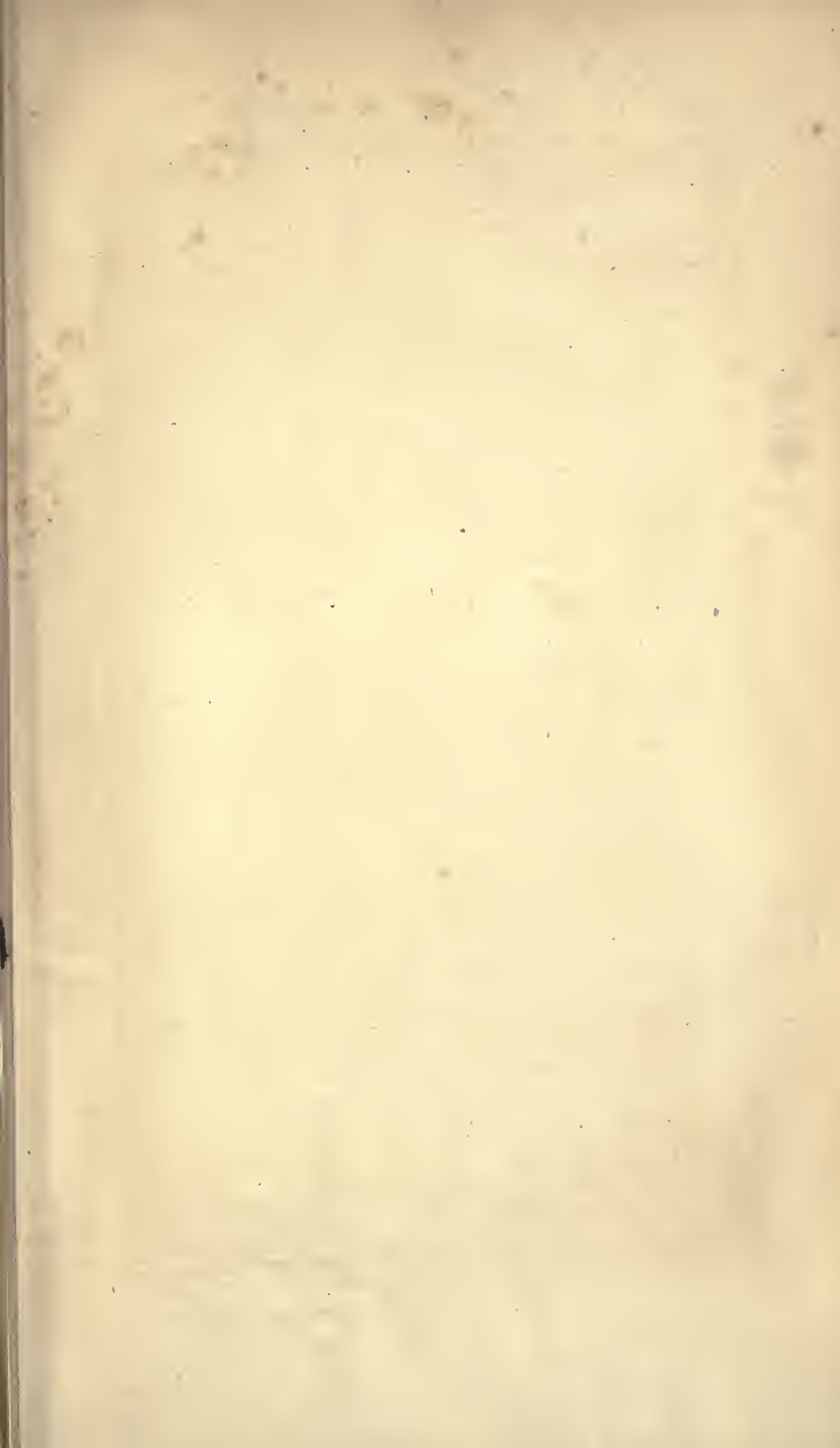
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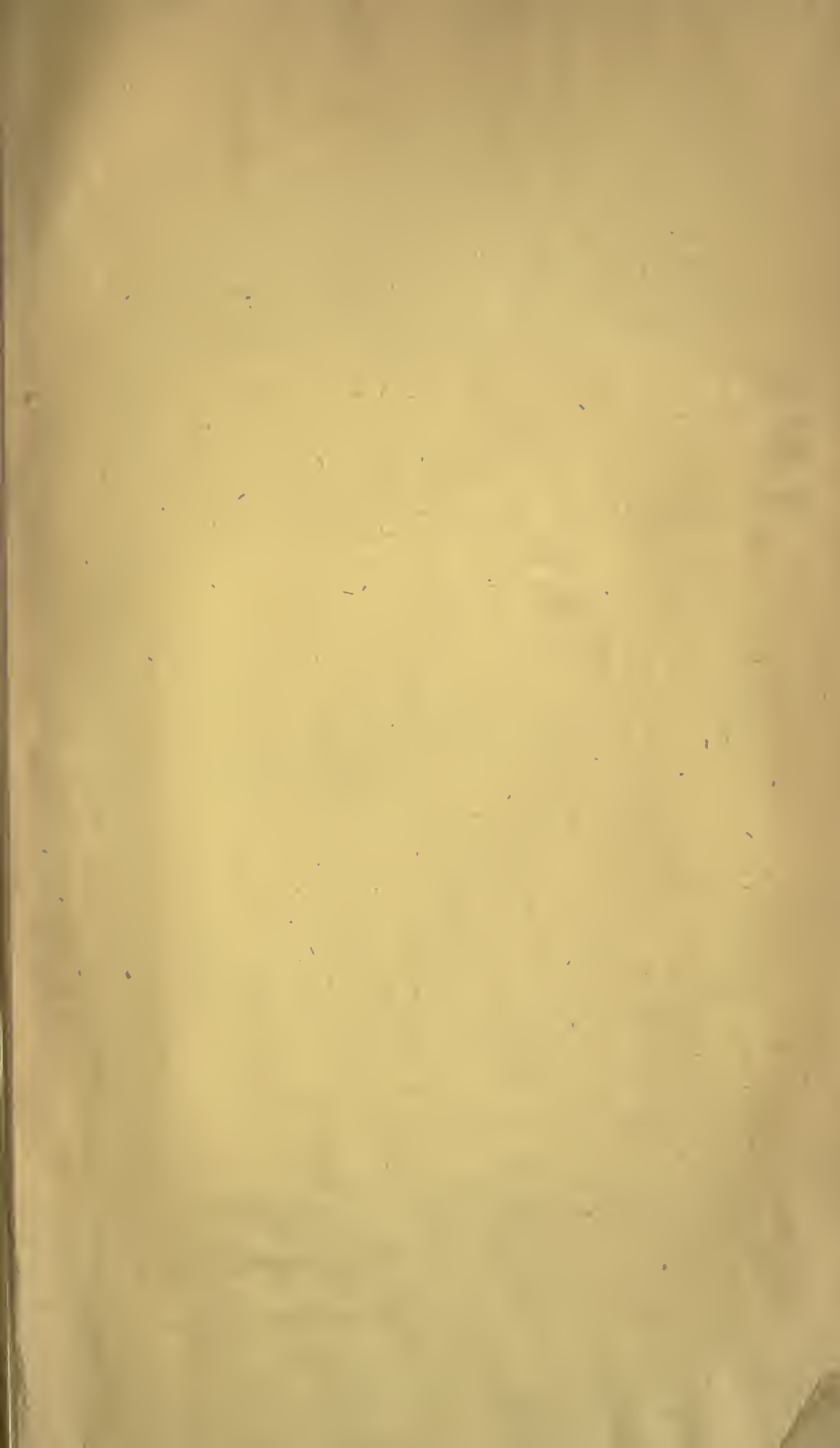
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